

This electronic thesis or dissertation has been downloaded from the King's Research Portal at <https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/>



Gilding and staining the mind : the phemomenology and metaphysics of visual experience

Spener, Maja Helga

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author and no quotation from it or information derived from it may be published without proper acknowledgement.

END USER LICENCE AGREEMENT



Unless another licence is stated on the immediately following page this work is licensed

under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International

licence. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

You are free to copy, distribute and transmit the work

Under the following conditions:

- Attribution: You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the author (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work).
- Non Commercial: You may not use this work for commercial purposes.
- No Derivative Works - You may not alter, transform, or build upon this work.

Any of these conditions can be waived if you receive permission from the author. Your fair dealings and other rights are in no way affected by the above.

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact librarypure@kcl.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Gilding or Staining the Mind: Introspection and the Metaphysics of Visual Phenomenology

Maja H. Spener
King's College London
Submitted for the degree of PhD in Philosophy



Abstract

This thesis is about philosophical theories of visual experience. I look at the methodology employed by philosophers engaged in such a project. I argue that they standardly use an introspection-based methodology in constructing an account of visual experience (Chapter 1). They use claims made on the basis of first-person reflection on visual experience – claims about visual phenomenology – to argue about the nature of such experience. The main task of my thesis is to undermine this approach to constructing a theory of visual experience.

The approach assumes that we have a good grip on visual phenomenology in introspection. I argue that this assumption is mistaken. My strategy is two-fold. Firstly, I discuss and attack the two main introspection-based claims about visual phenomenology. One is the claim that it introspectively appears as if experience is transparent (Chapters 2 and 3). The other is that it introspectively appears as if experience presents us with actually existing objects (Chapter 4). After setting out each claim, I show that they are either useless in theory-construction or highly questionable.

Secondly, I criticise the introspection-based methodology directly (Chapter 5). I argue it is seriously defective. Its use presupposes that we have appropriate introspective access to the phenomenology of experience. I show that our access to the required kind of introspective evidence is extremely problematic. But without such evidence this methodology cannot be applied legitimately – use of it instantly becomes misuse.

According to my critique, then, much influential work on visual experience in the last century and today is methodologically unsound. This raises questions about the right methodology to construct a theory of experience and about what role, if any, considerations about visual phenomenology might play in it. I finish by making brief suggestions about how to answer these questions (Chapter 6).

Table of Contents

Introduction

Chapter 1: The Standard Method and its Background

(1) Introduction	9
(2) Terminology and background	9
(3) The metaphysics of visual experience	19
(4) Phenomenal Adequacy and Introspective Access	26
(5) The Standard Method	28
(6) Outline of what is to come	32

Chapter 2: Transparency Part I: Looking-through

(1) Introduction	33
(2) Transparency	34
(3) Two claims	37
(4) Looking-through	39
(5) Some doubts about (LT)	44
(6) Weaker Intentionalism	56

Chapter 3: Transparency Part II: Mind-independence

(1) Introduction	63
(2) Mind-independence	64
(3) The idea of a general phenomenological entailment	68
(4) The notion of spatial character	72
(5) A conceptual connection between space and mind-independence	78
(6) After-images and mind-dependence	86

Chapter 4: The Presentational Feature

(1) Introduction	92
(2) The Phenomenal Principle	93
(3) The presentational feature	97
(4) The there-ness feature	102
(5) There-ness and (P)	105
(6) There-ness and the Phenomenal Principle	108

Chapter 5: Introspective Evidence

(1) Introduction	112
(2) Phenomenal Adequacy and the Standard Method	112
(3) Introspective evidence	116
(4) Intuition and misuse of the Standard Method	119

Chapter 6: A Loose End and Some Speculation

(1) Introduction	128
(2) Eliminativism about visual phenomenology	128
(3) Methodology – which is the right one?	133

Summary Conclusion	138
---------------------------	-----

Bibliography	142
---------------------	-----

Acknowledgements

This thesis took a while to write and there are many people I wish to thank for helping me along the way. I have received useful comments on early versions of chapter 5 from David Chalmers, John Hawthorne, Matthew Nudds, David Papineau, Mark Sainsbury and Matthew Soteriou. Keith Allen provided a nice response to material from chapter 3 presented at a conference and Matthew Nudds and Matthew Soteriou gave me helpful last-minute comments on chapter 2. I thank them all very much. My supervisor Gabriel Segal has been enthusiastic about my project from the beginning and has been an invaluable source of motivation. I am very grateful for his patience and excellent support, philosophical and otherwise. To everyone familiar with his work, Michael Martin's influence will be obvious when reading this thesis. I consider myself privileged to have been his student. My friend Susanna Siegel is a great person with whom to discuss philosophy and I do so as much as I can. She has read the entire thesis and given me superb comments. I am deeply grateful to her. My family, in particular my parents, have been more than supportive. Gratitude alone does not capture how I feel about their goodness towards me. Finally, Scott Sturgeon's unfailing encouragement and generous counsel created the kind of environment that allowed me to find, work out and finish this thesis project. Things would certainly not have turned out as well as they did without him.

Introduction

Suppose you have painted your living room wall in a subtle shade of yellow. Your friend visits and says: ‘but it looks as if it’s green.’ ‘Nonsense,’ you say, ‘it looks yellow, or you have to leave.’ We often talk about how things look to us, or how they visually appear to us. Visual appearance concerns us not only in everyday situations like the one just described. We use observations about how things look in scientific investigations, when classifying species of plants, or in literature, when part of the story details how a scene looks to the protagonist for instance. There are countless examples. How things visually appear to one and to others matters greatly in many areas of life and discourse. Philosophers are also often interested in visual appearance. Specifically, those investigating visual experience frequently choose a methodological approach one might describe as ‘phenomenological ascent’. They use claims about visual phenomenology – about how things visually appear to us – to argue about the nature of such experience. The present thesis is about this methodology. It is concerned with visual appearance and the metaphysics of visual experience by focussing on philosopher’s use of the former to construct the latter.

Importantly, a crucial assumption that underlies use of this methodology is that we have sufficiently good, direct and unproblematic first-person access to the visual phenomenology of our experiences. Claims about visual appearance tend to be endorsed by philosophers with an air of pre-theoretic innocence and authority. Given the assumption about introspective access to visual phenomenology, it is generally expected that one can give an honest description of visual appearance. Elizabeth Anscombe, for example, insists that ‘[t]here is such a thing as simply describing impressions, simply describing the sensible appearances that present themselves to one situated thus and so’ (Anscombe 1965, 173). Similarly, C. D. Broad holds that we can consider visual experience ‘from the phenomenological point of view’, by which he means that one can ‘describe them as they appear to any unsophisticated percipient, and as they inevitably *go on appearing* even to sophisticated percipients...’ (Broad 1965b, 30).

I think this assumption is mistaken. For one thing, I find that the particular introspection-based claims about visual phenomenology put forward by philosophers in the course of their theorising are usually highly doubtful or downright unacceptable. To give you an extreme example, consider Paul Boghossian’s and David Velleman’s description of the phenomenology of colour experience:

When one enters a dark room and switches on a light, the colours of surrounding objects look as if they have been revealed, not as if they have been activated. That is, the dispelling of darkness looks like the drawing of a curtain from the colours of objects no less than from the objects themselves. If colours looked like dispositions, however, then they would seem to *come on* when illuminated, just as a lamp comes on when its switch is flipped. Turning on the light would seem, simultaneously, like turning on the colours; or perhaps it would seem like waking up the colours, just as it is seen to startle the cat. Conversely, when the light was extinguished, the colours would not look as if they were being concealed or shrouded in the ensuing darkness: rather, they would look as if they were becoming dormant, like the cat returning to sleep. But colours do not look like that, or not, at least, to us. (Boghossian and Velleman 1997a, 85)

I think of this as rampant use of claims about visual phenomenology. Assuming that Boghossian and Velleman base their descriptions of visual appearance on first-person reflection on their experience, none of the descriptions impresses me as especially well suited. Using vocabulary such as ‘concealing’ and ‘becoming dormant’ to describe how one experiences colour is loaded with mood and almost lyrical interpretation of the situation. The appropriateness of such descriptions has as much to do with how I look at the situation as with how the situation looks to me. But colour does not wake up or fall asleep – why should a disposition to look coloured be like a cat in this respect or any other? – and darkness does not conceal anything in the sense of deliberately hiding something. Some serious poetic licence needs to be taken to describe colour experience in this manner. Clearly, this goes far beyond a plain description of visual phenomenology that everyone might be able to agree to.

Now, usually philosophers do not make introspection-based claims about visual phenomenology in quite this rampant way. Still, as I will show, the main claims about visual phenomenology that are commonly put forward in the literature are also problematic if considered as based purely on first-person reflection on experience. But apart from my objection to particular claims about visual phenomenology found in the literature, I reject the assumption about first-person access to visual phenomenology on more general terms. And I will argue that these are reasons that cut right into the heart of the methodology mentioned above.

Overall, the aim of this thesis is to undermine this methodology. First I argue against particular claims about visual phenomenology endorsed by users of the methodology. Then I provide a general objection to the methodology itself. Both strands of attack show that we do not have

the right kind of direct unproblematic first-person access to our experiences required for the methodology to work.

An introduction is not only a place to announce what one will be talking about in the pages following it. It is also a place to say what one will *not* be talking about and to warn against potential misunderstandings. So I want to mention here that there is a venerable tradition of philosophical focus on phenomenology that I will ignore entirely in this thesis. It is the work of the continental Phenomenologists, including most prominently that of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Instead, I concentrate on relevant work in the Anglo-American analytic tradition in the last hundred years or so. The reason for the exclusion is simply that it makes for a more manageable project. I think it would be very much worthwhile and illuminating to trace areas of agreement between these different traditions concerning their use of considerations about visual phenomenology. But this is a project for another day.

I also need to caution against a potential misunderstanding of my project. Let me emphasise that the critique I put forward in this thesis is *not* directed against any particular metaphysics of visual experience. Rather, it is directed against a widespread way that theory construction is done in this area. I aim to undermine not the conclusions put forward in the work discussed, but the manner in which they are reached. As we shall see, one finds users of the methodology I attack among advocates of all the main views of visual experience. If I am right, then, much influential work on visual experience is methodologically unsound.

The title of this thesis includes the phrase ‘gilding or staining the mind’. This is partly borrowed from Hume. In his discussion of moral motivation, Hume says that ‘[taste] has a productive faculty, and gilding or staining all natural objects with the colours, borrowed from the internal sentiment, raises in a manner a new creation’ (Hume 1975, 294). Similarly, I think that in basing their views about the nature of visual experience on introspection-based claims about visual phenomenology, philosophers are in danger of gilding or staining the mind. This thesis contains my case in support of this accusation.

Chapter 1

The Standard Method and Its Background

(1) Introduction

In this chapter I will do two things. First, I will lay out the background to my discussion in this thesis. This involves looking at some of the central terminology (section (2)) and introducing the main theories of the metaphysics of visual experience (section (3)). Secondly, I present the target of this thesis. I articulate the dominant methodology for constructing a metaphysics of visual experience (section (5)), having set out its main motivation in section (4). With this target clearly in view, I give a brief plan of attack in section (6).

(2) Terminology and background

My prime objective in this section is to introduce and discuss some terminology relevant in subsequent sections and chapters. I realise that starting out with a section on terminology does not sound very exciting. But unfortunately the vocabulary in this area causes much mischief. A good deal of disputes are exacerbated by confusion about what is meant by the central terms. Issues become much more tractable if one is clear right from the beginning about one's terminology. So, I insist that a certain amount of time needs to be spend on it. In this section, then, I concentrate on terminology involving three notions central to the discussion in this thesis: experience, phenomenal character and introspection.

Experience

Walking along the beach on a fine day is truly pleasant. One feels the sun warming one's skin, one smells the seaweed and can almost taste salty air, one hears the cry of the seagulls and sees a fishing boat sail across the horizon. Touching, smelling, tasting, hearing and seeing are all different ways in which we are sensitive to our environment. A common way to think of them is in terms of senses: we have five senses, namely touch, smell, taste, hearing and sight. The senses are different ways in which we acquire information – or misinformation – about our environment. On a given occasion of receiving information via the senses, something is happening in the sensing subject. For instance, it appears to the subject as if the air tastes salty; it appears to her as if the seagulls cry; etc. In receiving sensory information the subject is thus aware of her environment; the latter appears to her. In cases like this, subjects have what are standardly called *sensory experiences*.

Let me briefly mention some qualifications concerning the term ‘experience’. One might hold that the term ‘experience’ covers a much wider range of phenomena, such as moods and emotions. Seeing the Eiffel Tower when cheerful and seeing it when distressed (assuming everything else to remain the same) would therefore count as different types of experience. But here I am interested only in *sensory* experience, i.e. experience relevant to sense perception. Even given this restriction, however, one might hold that a subject has only one experience at any one time. On this view, all the different senses, if active, contribute to a single experience composed of the total of sensory appearances the subject has at that time. Strolling along the beach a subject might have an experience of tasting salty air, hearing seagulls cry, touching sand under her feet and smelling seaweed. Although perfectly respectable, I take a different view from such an all-inclusive one. My preferred view has the different senses associated with different kinds of experience. This is because in this thesis I am concerned with just one sort of sensory experience, namely that associated with sight – i.e. *visual experience*.

Other kinds of sensory experience are auditory experience (hearing), haptic experience (touch) and olfactory experience (taste and smell). For those who can see, visual experience is almost certainly the dominant kind of experience, the one that is relied on most as a source of information about one’s environment. It is also probably the most investigated of all sensory experience. From now on, I concentrate solely on visual experience, even though I will sometimes omit the qualifier ‘visual’. If I want to talk about experience other than visual experience I will say so explicitly.

A typical visual experience is when one visually perceives something. Suppose you are visiting Paris and you stand in front of the Eiffel Tower. Perceiving, like seeing is a success verb. You cannot perceive the Eiffel Tower if the Eiffel Tower is not there, in the perceptually salient environment. The Eiffel Tower also has to be related to your experience in the right sort of way. Many philosophers hold that this is a causal relation, i.e. that one cannot perceive some object *o* without *o* being there in the perceptually salient environment causing the experience in the right sort of way.¹ But this is not the only way to cash out the idea that the object perceived has to be related to one’s experience in the right sort of way. Some hold, for instance, that the relation is primitive and literally includes the object in question. I call visual experiences that afford one’s perception of objects (*visual*) *perceptions* or (*visual*) *perceptual experiences*. However, one

¹ ‘Caused in the right sort of way’ is meant to rule out deviant causes. By claiming that there is such a causal condition, one is not necessarily putting forward a causal analysis of visual experience.

can have a visual experience about an object without there being any such object in the perceptually salient environment relating to the experience in the right sort of way. Under the influence of certain drugs or diseases, for example, people are known to have visual experiences even when they do not perceive anything. I call these kinds of experiences *(visual) hallucinations* or *(visual) hallucinatory experiences*.

One does not just experience objects as bare particulars; one experiences them as having certain properties. One's experience has attributive elements. For example, when one has a visual experience of a cat one does not simply experience a particular object. Rather, if conditions are right, one experiences it *as* a cat. In the event, one's experience is *as of* a cat. I use the locutions 'an experience as of' and 'experiencing something as something' to talk about the sensory information (or misinformation) provided by the experience. It captures what visually appears to the subject in virtue of having the experience.

The important contrast is this: a subject might have an experience of a cat without it being an experience as of a cat. Suppose you are wandering around the neighbourhood at dusk and you see an animal cross the street. You are excited because you believe that you have just seen one of the elusive urban foxes. As it happens, what you saw was in fact a cat, but because of strange lighting conditions and funny angles the animal visually appeared to be a fox. In this case, you had an experience of some animal that was in fact a cat. But you were experiencing it as a fox. So, the experience was as of a fox (and not as of a cat).

Note that this kind of mistake can only occur when the experience is perceptual. Obviously, it does not make sense to say that one has a hallucinatory experience of a cat but it is as of a fox.² We can, and commonly do, make a distinction between those perceptual experiences where there is and those where there is not a mistake of the kind just mentioned. The former are *veridical (visual) perceptual experiences* or *veridical (visual) perceptions*. If one has a veridical perception as of a cat then there is a cat that one perceives. When one misperceives a cat for a fox, one has an *illusory (visual) perceptual experience* or an *(visual) illusion*. An illusion is a defective perceptual experience: although one does perceive something, one misperceives some of its sensible properties.

² I think the distinction between illusions and hallucinations may be vague, though. Consider delusory experiences of the kind described in Goethe's *Erkoenig*. A boy with a high fever has a delusive experience as of the Grim Reaper caused by gnarled trees. I am inclined to think of such experiences as extreme illusions. But it is not implausible to hold that the boy hallucinates.

This is a good place to clarify my use of a host of terms which one commonly finds employed in this context, most prominently ‘intentionality’ and ‘aboutness’. Many people hold that it is an essential part of experiences that they are directed at something, or that they are about something. For experience to have aboutness is for it to provide the experiencing subject with information (or misinformation) about something. The sense of information provision I have in mind is an immediate sense, which does not include any deferred information. So, in a case where one sees that the queen is home because one sees the flag on top of Buckingham Palace, the queen’s being home is not information immediately provided by the experience. Experience shares this feature with other mental states. For example, a belief is essentially a belief about some state of affairs, such as the belief that Havana is the capital of Cuba. In having this belief the subject is in possession of information about something (i.e. the state of affairs that Havana is the capital of Cuba). Brentano (1973) is often credited with the original thesis that *all* mental phenomena have this feature of aboutness. He called it ‘intentionality’ and he held that it characterises mental phenomena essentially, that it is ‘the mark of the mental’ (see Crane 1998). The term has become popular among philosophers to refer to the aboutness of mental phenomena. Not everyone agrees with Brentano’s claim that intentionality is an essential feature of the mental, though. Bodily sensations such as pain states and emotions are often thought to be exceptions.³

However, ‘intentionality’ or ‘intentional’ are also commonly used to talk about a particular way to account for the aboutness of experience. This is a theory of the nature of experience that holds that experience is similar to propositional attitudes, such as beliefs and desires. I will set out this view in section (3), along with the other main views of the nature of experience. In order to avoid confusion, I will reserve the terms ‘intentionality’ and ‘intentional’ for talk about the theory of experience just mentioned, and not use them in the more general sense I outlined in the previous paragraph. Instead, to capture this general sense in which experience is about something, I will say that experience has *subject-matter* or *aboutness*. On my usage, the idea of subject-matter of experience is not prejudiced in any way. To say that experience has subject-matter is not yet to say anything about how it is best characterised or what nature it has. It is

³ See Crane 1998 and 2001, for discussion of Brentano’s thesis and for arguments that intentionality is the essential feature of all and only mental states. (On the latter issue, see also Tye 1995.) Among the dissenting voices are, e.g. Searle 1983 and McGinn 1982.

merely to refer to the information immediately provided by, or contained in, experience, whatever it is.⁴

Phenomenal character

Visual experience is discussed in many different areas of philosophy, as for instance in the context of debates about the mind-body problem and about perceptual knowledge. I will say a little more about this in the next section. In many of these debates, a considerable bulk of the discussion is focussed on a certain aspect of experience: that it manifests phenomenology, or phenomenal consciousness.⁵ This aspect is somewhat peculiar in that, on the one hand, most theorists agree that experience has it, yet, on the other hand, giving a general gloss on what it is appears to be far from straightforward. There are various attempts at articulation that are often no better than verbal gesturing.⁶ For this reason, it is worth setting out the main strands underlying this notion of phenomenal consciousness.

A common starting point is Thomas Nagel's thought that conscious experience is a *subjective* phenomenon. An experience provides the subject undergoing the experience with a point of view on something, specifically, with the first personal point of view. So, for instance, when having an experience as of the Eiffel Tower, a subject is thereby visually presented with the Eiffel Tower from the first person perspective. This subjective aspect is responsible for experiences having a distinctive kind of character. Nagel (1974) expressed this by saying that when one has an experience, there is something it is like for the subject to undergo that experience. This somewhat cumbersome phrase - what experience is like for one - has become common currency since.⁷ Another way in which it is often spelled out involves the

⁴ I am simply stipulating this neutral use of the term 'subject-matter'. There are some who would disagree with me that talk of subject-matter of experience can be neutral in this way. See, perhaps, Martin 1998. The term 'content' is also sometimes used for the aboutness of experience. However, here, too, one finds application of this term in a much more restricted way, assuming the particular theory of the nature of experience mentioned above (as, e.g. in Byrne 2001). Again, to avoid confusion I will refrain from employing the term 'content' in a more general sense and reserve it for its more restricted use.

⁵ While mental phenomena other than experience certainly can be conscious, it is a matter of dispute whether phenomenology is exclusive to experience. See e.g. Block 1997, 380; Crane 2001, 71-72 for more inclusive views. In this thesis I do not take a stand on this question.

⁶ Maybe that is not so peculiar. Galen Strawson clearly does not think so: 'Consider a human being persisting through time. Consider this portion of reality and ask what it contains. It certainly contains experiential phenomena, by which I mean all the phenomena of consciousness or conscious experience, whose reality I take for granted and in no need of laborious definition for the present purposes. ... Personalized ostensive definition will do: one says to each reader, "You know what it is like from your own case, as you burn your finger, listen to Beethoven, give birth, and so on."' Strawson 1994, 67 and footnote 1, 85.

⁷ Nagel 1974. See also Block 1980, 278; Chalmers 1996, 4; Loar 1997, 597; Levine 2001, 3-4. Farrell 1950 is sometimes said to have been the first to mention what-it-is-like properties. This is true in a certain sense, see in

idea of quality: phenomenal consciousness is thought to concern *qualitative* aspects of experience. Such aspects relate to how the subject experiences what she experiences. For example, when having an experience as of the Eiffel Tower, one might ask how it is for the subject to experience the Eiffel Tower. Again, qualitative aspects of experience are thought to be responsible for the character of experience.

Hence, these two ideas – subjectivity and quality – both tend to be used in elucidation of the notion of phenomenal consciousness. Experience is said to be phenomenally conscious in that it has ‘some immediate subjective “feel”’, ‘some distinctive experiential quality’, some ‘qualitative content’, a ‘raw feel’, and so forth.⁸ The phrase *what experience is like for one* is meant to pick out the experience’s *subjective* or *qualitative character*. The three phrases are usually used interchangeably.

But one might legitimately wonder whether there are not really two what-it-is-like aspects of experience, corresponding to the two ideas, subjectivity and quality. The thought would be that one what-it-is-like aspect concerns the perspectival aspect of experience: the character of experience involves the subjective point of view. ‘[T]he fact that an organism has conscious experience *at all* means, basically, that there is something it is like to *be* that organism.’ (Nagel 1974, 436) The other what-it-is-like aspect concerns the quality of what the experience presents to one. ‘[T]he “phenomenal features” of feelings, sensations, and perceptual states: the felt features of pains and itches that make them (so one wants to say) the kinds of sensations they are, the distinctive feature of a visual experience of redness that determines “what it is like” to see red and distinguishes this from what it is like to see green, blue, yellow, and so on.’ (Shoemaker 1994, 57) Are these perhaps distinct aspects of experience?

Jackson (1990) seems to think so. He proposes the following distinction between two kinds of what-it-is-like aspect. He says the first kind concerns the subjective point of view of a single experiencing individual. It cannot be known by anyone other than by the individual subject herself. The other kind, however, is a special quality of experience that can only be known by

particular p. 185; indeed it is astonishing how much of Nagel 1974 and Jackson’s knowledge argument (Jackson 1990) are anticipated here. But on the other hand, Farrell only discusses the idea of what it is like to be, e.g. a Martian in terms of a possible objection to his view – he proceeds to dismiss such ideas as in the end senseless.

⁸ See Tye 1995, 3. Fodor 1994, 36. Shoemaker 1980, 251.

anyone who undergoes that kind of experience.⁹ I do not think that this is a successful way to make out a difference between the two what-it-is-like aspects. It involves radicalising Nagel's thought so that points of view are individuated at the level of the individual subject. However, one might hold a less fine-grained conception of points of view, one that individuates at the level of species, for instance. While I might never know what it is like to be you as an individual, I do know what it is like to be the kind of creature that you are, for I am one of them myself. I think this is much more in line with what Nagel had in mind. By the same token, it would be equally possible to hold a radicalised version of the second what-it-is-like aspect, so that the same type of experience can only be undergone by one individual.¹⁰

Perhaps a distinction can be made out this way. Note, that it is easier to think of the first what-it-is-like aspect as something that different kinds of conscious mental phenomena have in common. Any conscious state, be it experience, belief, desire, etc., involves a crucial measure of subjectivity, i.e. that there is something it is like to *be* a creature undergoing that state. This, it seems to me, is not true of the second what-it-is-like aspect. It is easier to think of it as kind- or mode-specific. For each kind of conscious mental phenomenon it has its unique qualitative what-it-is-like-for-one aspects, if it has them at all. E.g. visual experience has what-it-is-visually-like aspects, belief might have what-it-is-believingly-like aspects, etc. Thus, conscious mental kinds always share a subjective character, but, if they have qualitative character at all, the latter differs from kind to kind.

Be this as it may, I will not commit myself to a full-blown distinction here. In this thesis I will assume that visual experience has both subjective and qualitative aspects but I shall treat them as aspects of a single what-it-is-like notion. However, this does not mean that I hold that they are equivalent aspects either. They might be separate ingredients in what experience is like. At any rate, when I speak of what experience is like, or what-it-is-like aspects, I mean a notion that comprises both of them. But it will sometimes turn out to be useful to shift emphasis between perspectival and qualitative aspects of the character of experience.

⁹ 'When I complained that all the physical knowledge about Fred was not enough to tell us what his special color experience was like, I was not explaining that we weren't finding out what it is like to *be* Fred. I was complaining that there is something *about* his experience, a property of it, of which we were left ignorant. And if and when we come to know what this property is we still will not know what it is like to *be* Fred... No amount of knowledge about Fred, be it physical or not, amounts to knowledge "from the inside" considering Fred.' Jackson 1990, 473.

¹⁰ Indeed, it was similar worries about private qualitative aspects of beliefs that drove Frege 1956 to distinguish between ideas and thoughts and conceive of the latter as abstract but public objects, while holding the former to be private mental properties. See also Friedman 1990 for discussion of this issue.

Importantly, though, what-it-is-like aspects are said to be essential to the mental episode in question.¹¹ That there is something it is like to enjoy the episode is part of what makes it the episode it is.

The what-it-is-like aspects of visual experience constitute its *phenomenal character*. Accordingly, visual phenomenal character is usually explained with this equivalence:

Visual phenomenal character = what it is like to have a visual experience

A subject who reflects on the phenomenal character of a given visual experience reflects on how things strike her in having that experience. Let me give you a simple example. Suppose I see a green cup on a table in front of me. I turn my attention to what it is like to have that experience. So introspecting, I come to have beliefs about the phenomenal character of my experience. Suppose I then articulate such beliefs. Introspective reports on phenomenal character may be expressed in different but equally acceptable ways. 'It seems to me as if there is a green cup on a table'; 'it sensibly appears to me as if there is a green cup on a table' or 'it looks to me as if there is a green cup on a table' are all locutions one might use. In this thesis I will mainly confine myself to the latter one and I will talk of *look-ascriptions* to cover such introspection-based reports.

Introspection

The basic picture of introspection I work with has three parts. First, there is the object of introspection. It is the mental episode (or aspect thereof) under introspective investigation. Second, there is the output of introspection. It is the result of introspective enquiry. In the normal case, this is a belief about the object of introspection. And third, there is the introspective process itself. It is whatever activity leads to the output from the object of introspection. In the case of central concern, the object of introspection is the phenomenal character of visual experience; and the output of introspection is belief about such character.

This characterisation of introspection is meant to be as general as possible. It is consistent with various views, e.g. Armstrong's perceptual model of introspection, or Shoemaker's constitutive view. According to Armstrong, introspection is like inner sense experience, the

¹¹ See e.g. references cited in footnote 7.

mind becomes aware of its own states by quasi-perceptually encountering them in introspection (Armstrong 1968, 323-7). Shoemaker, on the other hand, holds that there is a conceptual and constitutive connection between object and output of introspection (Shoemaker 1996b, Lecture II). The details of accounts of introspection do not matter very much in this thesis. Where they do I will provide the necessary particulars.

Another issue needs to be discussed at this point. It concerns our introspective knowledge, or perhaps more carefully, our introspective awareness of phenomenal character. I want to point out that there is no uniform view as to whether such awareness of phenomenal character is a special or an everyday sort of awareness. Armstrong makes a distinction between types of introspective consciousness that is akin to what I have in mind.

Sometimes a distinction is drawn between mere 'reflex' consciousness, which is normally always present while we are awake..., and consciousness of a more explicit, self-conscious sort. ... [I]ntrospective consciousness normally only has a watching brief with respect to our mental states. Only sometimes do we carefully scrutinize our own current state of mind. (Armstrong 1997, 725).

Armstrong holds that there are two ways in which one can be introspectively aware of one's own mental states and episodes. The first is an everyday sort of way which under normal circumstances accompanies all of our conscious first-order mental states. It is what one lacks when one 'spaces out' and continues an activity on auto-pilot. Armstrong gives the example of long-distance driving to show the contrast. Most drivers will be familiar with the feeling of suddenly 'coming to' and realising that one has been driving for a while without really being aware of it. Before coming to, one did not have a certain kind of self-awareness of what one was doing. Just this self-awareness is what Armstrong means by 'reflex introspective awareness'. He rightly points out that this is an everyday sort of awareness; under normal circumstances, reflex introspective awareness always has a 'watching brief' over our experiences. However, there is also a more special introspective awareness that occurs when one makes a deliberate effort to scrutinise one's mental states and episodes. In this case one is not simply self-aware of what one is doing in the first everyday sense, but one is carefully attending to one's mental states in a special way. Armstrong suggests we might call this special kind of introspective awareness 'introspection proper'.

With this distinction in mind, let us now consider again the idea of introspective awareness of phenomenal character. Two questions immediately arise. Firstly, does the distinction apply to

our introspective awareness of what experience is like, i.e. are there two ways in which we can be introspectively aware of phenomenal character? Secondly, we might ask which kind of introspective awareness philosophers have in mind when they ask us to introspect what experience is like. This becomes pressing especially if the answer to the first question is affirmative.

Now, I think that the first question certainly permits of a positive answer. On the one hand, it is plausible to hold that when having conscious experiences, there is normally some phenomenal awareness present. Without it one would be in the position of the spaced-out long-distance driver and not really knowing what one is doing or seeing. One's awareness of what experience is like in this sense is a routine concomitant of normal first-order experience. On the other hand, it is also not unreasonable to think that there is a more specific way of introspecting what experience is like. To really focus on phenomenal character itself takes a special epistemic effort. So Armstrong's distinction applies straightforwardly to introspective awareness of what experience is like. Such awareness is either an everyday introspective awareness or a special introspective awareness.

As to the second question, most philosophers are not clear about which kind of introspective awareness they are talking about. Both views can be found in the literature. Tye, for instance, can be interpreted to have elements of both. When one looks at the details of his account of introspection it seems plausible to attribute the everyday introspective awareness view to him. He holds that introspective awareness is awareness *that* an experience with a given phenomenal character is occurring, and not awareness *of* an experience and its character in the sense that one is aware of objects and properties in the world. It is by being experientially aware of things and their properties in the outside world, that one is introspectively aware of phenomenal character. Tye claims that this introspective process is automatic: it is 'a reliable process that triggers the application of a suitable [recognition] phenomenal concept' to our awareness of properties in the world. On Tye's view, then, introspection involves neither a process of inner scanning or attention, nor a process of reasoning or inference. He says that it is often the case that we come to recognise what experience is like without this involving a special conscious act (Tye 2000, 52-3). On the basis of all this it seems as if Tye would be attracted to the everyday kind of introspective awareness of phenomenal character.

In other places, though, Tye provides explicit instructions to the reader to scrutinise their own states. ‘Focus your attention on the scene before your eyes and on how things *look* to you. (...) If you are attending to how things *look* to you, as opposed to how they are independent of how they look, you are bringing to bear your faculty of introspection.’ (Tye 2000, 45 and 46) Considering these instructions, his view here seems closer to the view that introspective awareness requires some special epistemic effort. At least, there is some implication that the faculty of introspection is not always brought to bear as a matter of course.

Certainly, none of these examples are conclusive evidence for either view and it is not clear which of them Tye would prefer in the end. More generally, I think that philosophers are not uniform in their views with respect to introspective awareness. So, some think that introspective awareness of phenomenal character usually, or perhaps even always, comes with the occurrence of visual experience. Others instead hold that it always involves a special epistemic effort, where this might be something that we don’t ordinarily do when having visual experiences. Some are not even clear which of these views they hold. Given this ambivalent attitude, it might be reasonable to ask whether their different assumptions about introspective awareness make a difference with respect to their introspection-based beliefs about phenomenal character. I will discuss this some more in chapter (2).

This concludes the presentation and discussion of some of the basic terminology. In the next section I will set out the last major piece of background. I will provide a brief introduction to, and an overview of, the main theories of the metaphysics of visual experience.

(3) The metaphysics of visual experience

If one looks at the history of the philosophy of perception and visual experience in the last hundred years, it becomes clear that philosophers have been very interested in visual experience throughout this time. A variety of philosophical motivations have prompted such interest, though. For instance, in the beginning of the last century, philosophers debated about the nature of experience primarily with a view to understanding its role in epistemology. Questions about perceptual knowledge and scepticism dominated the agenda. Three main camps determined the battleground: idealist views, direct realist views, and indirect realist views. The former consists most notably of defenders of phenomenalism and logical positivism (see e.g. Ayer 1936; Schlick 1979; Carnap 1967). In the direct realist camp one finds representatives of the Oxford Realist school, such as Cook Wilson (1926); Pritchard (1909)

and Austin (1962). The third, indirect realist camp, is populated largely by members of the Cambridge sense datum tradition (see e.g. Russell 1912, Moore 1913-14 and Price 1932). There is also more recent epistemology-driven interest in visual experience, pursued by, for instance, McDowell (1994) and Brewer (1999). A case can be made, though, that this recent interest is in fact part of the tradition of the Oxford Realists, especially via the influence of Austin (Marion 2000a and 2000b).

In the second half of last century and today a lot of the main focus has shifted to the philosophy of mind. The topic of visual experience is discussed mainly in the context of worries about materialism about the mind. Specifically, the question is whether materialism can accommodate phenomenal consciousness (e.g. Nagel 1974; Hill 1991; Tye 2000; Levine 2001; Papineau 2002). Related to this main worry are questions about how one might spell out and account for the difference between experience and other mental states, whether animals have the same experiences that we do, etc., (Peacocke 1983, 1992; Crane 1992; McDowell 1994; Carruthers 1998).

Although not as popular, another well-known philosophical interest in visual experience comes from metaphysics. According to some, perceptual experience holds the key to certain metaphysical notions. The classic example is P. F. Strawson's project of descriptive metaphysics, which includes an investigation into the notions of space and objectivity via the concept of experience (Strawson 1959, 1966).

In short, visual experience is much discussed in, and perhaps may be thought to lie at the intersection of, epistemology, philosophy of mind, and metaphysics. In all these different areas one finds philosophers engaged in the project of constructing a theory of the nature, or the metaphysics of experience. What are they all aiming to accomplish when they give a metaphysics of visual experience? As a general gloss we might say they are attempting to specify the basic ontological ingredients of visual experience. What makes for a 'basic ontological ingredient' is in some respects relative to one's explanatory aim. Such explanatory aims can and do vary – we have just seen that philosophers are interested in experience for many different reasons. But despite their different interests, one can reasonably expect there to be a rough overall agreement among philosophers as to what would count as a candidate for a basic ontological ingredient. They all wonder whether perceptual experience decomposes into explanatorily significant parts or whether it is a single, unanalysable state. Is visual experience

built from a relation, and if so, what is this relation and what sorts of entities are its relata? Or maybe visual experience is built from a kind of monadic property, and if so what sort of property is it? As these questions suggest, then, in giving the metaphysics of experience, philosophers aim to expose the general structure and composition of this mental phenomenon.

So, how should the metaphysics of experience be constructed – what are the basic ontological ingredients of visual experience? There are many different theories of the metaphysics of experience but there is no need to list them all here. Four basic positions determine the space of views on offer.

The first position holds that experience is built from a relation between a subject of experience and a special sensory object, a ‘sense datum’. This is the *Sense Datum Theory*. The relation in question is often called ‘acquaintance’ (coined by Russell 1912) or ‘direct apprehension’ (coined by Moore 1953). It is held to afford direct awareness of the object of experience, that is, Sense Datum Theory says that when one has an experience one is directly aware of a special object and its properties. Suppose a normally sighted subject is looking at a ripe tomato. According to Sense Datum Theory, the subject is directly aware of a red and round sense datum.¹²

The precise nature of these sense data or special sensory objects may vary according to different versions of Sense Datum Theory and here I treat this category as a motley one, comprehending very different kinds of object, including private, mental, abstract or immaterial objects. A common view is that sense data are internal, private and subjective objects. In other words, sense data exist only when one is directly aware of them and no two people can be directly aware of one and the same sense datum. (Ironically, this conception is particularly prevalent among those critical of Sense Datum Theory; see for instance Austin 1962). Moore called this the ‘accepted view’ of sense data and at first endorsed it. Later he came to abandon this view and held that some sense data at least exist when they are not apprehended.¹³ What different views of sense data share, however, is that they say that all we are directly aware of in experience are sense data and they are not part of ordinary material objects. (This needs to be qualified somewhat because some Logical Positivists, like Carnap, or early Phenomenalists, like

¹² For defenders of Sense Datum Theory see e.g. Russell 1912, Price 1932, Jackson 1977 and Robinson 1994.

¹³ See Moore 1953, 40-4 for his early view of sense data. (These are his collected lectures from the years 1910-11) See Moore 1913-14 for his change of mind on the subject. See also Russell 1914 for a view similar to later Moore.

Berkeley regarded material objects as constructions out of sensory information. But I think this is largely a terminological issue: what Sense Data Theorists have in common is that sense data are not identical to ordinary mind-independent material objects.)

Note that defenders of Sense Datum Theory generally hold their view to be true of all types of experience, perceptual and non-perceptual. The idea is that veridical perception, illusion and hallucination are all acquaintance relations between the subject and assorted sense data. Thus a veridical visual experience as of something red and round and a matching hallucination (by 'matching' I mean indistinguishable from the subject's point of view) are both accounted for in terms of the subject being acquainted with a red and round sense datum. The difference between a veridical experience and a hallucinatory experience is usually dealt with in terms of different causal relations obtaining between the mental component in common between them and external states of affairs. The important point is that this view assumes that all types of experience, if they are matching, share an explanatorily significant common mental component: the nature of all three of them have something important in common. For this reason, Sense Datum Theory, and any view like it in this respect, is often called a 'common factor view'.

The second position – *Intentionalism* – says that experience is a kind of mental representation. According to this view, experience is individuated by appeal to intentional or representational properties. These are properties which are themselves individuated by reference to objects and properties whose presence would make the experience veridical. In other words, intentional properties specify conditions under which experience is correct. In virtue of having properties in this way extrinsically individuated, an experience comes to represent a state of affairs composed of those objects and properties by reference to which the correctness condition is specified. Thus, a subject's experience as of a tomato would have properties that are individuated by reference to red tomatoes. The experience thereby comes to represent a tomato. Intentionalism says that in such a case one is directly aware of what is represented by the experience, namely a red tomato. Importantly, though, one is not directly aware of what does the representing, i.e. the experience itself (the vehicle of content).¹⁴

¹⁴ For proponents of Intentionalism see e.g. Tye 1992, 1995, 2000, Harman 1990, Dretske 1995, Crane 2001, and Byrne 2001. This type of view is also referred to as *Representationalism*. See Crane 1995, for discussion of the notion of representation. Intentionalists differ as to whether representational content is individuated with respect to tomato properties, tomato surfaces, etc. Moreover, there is disagreement as to whether representational content is general or particular. For discussion see Soteriou 2000 and Martin 2002a.

Like Sense Datum Theory, Intentionalism is a common factor view. It says that all types of experience are individuated by appeal to intentional properties. A veridical experience as of a tomato and a matching hallucination are both thought to share the same type of mental component: intentional content. In both cases it is accounted for in terms of intentional properties that are individuated by reference to a tomato. In other words, an experience can represent a state of affairs in absence of that state of affairs actually obtaining. Again, the shared component is explanatorily significant and hence makes for a common factor in the nature of the three types of experiences.

Recall that in the previous section I mentioned that the terms 'content' and 'intentionality' were often used in the context of a particular theory of visual experience. I had in mind Intentionalism. Defenders of this view say that the subject-matter of experience is what is represented by the experience and they hold that it is exclusively and exhaustively accounted for in terms of intentional properties.¹⁵ They call it the 'intentional content' or the 'representational content' of experience. I will use the terms 'content' and 'intentional' or 'intentionality' only in the context of discussing Intentionalism to mean a subject-matter of experience accounted for in terms of intentional properties.

The third position holds that experience is individuated by appeal to non-intentional properties. These properties are not themselves individuated by reference to objects and properties which determine correctness conditions for the experience. In having them, an experience does not represent anything to the subject; rather, when one has such an experience one is directly aware of its non-intentional properties and hence of the experience itself. A defender of this view would say that the subject's experience as of the red tomato has certain non-intentional 'reddish' properties and in reflecting on this experience the subject is directly aware of them. Some liken this situation to being aware of the paint of a picture (instead of, or in addition to, what the picture is a picture of) and consequently, non-intentional properties are sometimes called 'mental paint properties'. In line with this, let us call this view the '*Mental Paint View*'. Most defenders tend not to claim that experience has only non-intentional or mental paint properties. Usually they hold it in combination with some form of Intentionalism

¹⁵ 'What is represented by experience' is a slippery phrase. It may be used to refer to either the intentional content or to the state of affairs that makes this content true. Suppose for instance that a subject has an experience as of a blue matchbox before her. The intentional content of the experience is that a blue matchbox is before her. What would make this content true is the state of affairs of a matchbox being before the subject.

(e.g. Block 1995 and Peacocke 1983). A view called *Adverbialism* – the view that experiences are just sensory modifications of the mind in response to being causally affected by the world – is closer to the exclusive view but very much out of fashion (e.g. Chisholm 1966 and Tye 1984).

Non-intentional properties are sometimes called ‘intrinsic properties’ (e.g. Levine 1995). I prefer not to do so because ‘intrinsic’ has other important uses in philosophy as well. For instance, intrinsic is often taken to mean narrow, i.e. not dependent on anything outside the subject’s head (e.g. Segal 2000). But a narrow property may easily be an intentional one. For example, a property of experience may represent itself, or some other property of the experience. Another popular expression for non-intentional property is the term of art ‘quale’ or ‘qualia’ for the plural. Again, there are different uses. It is true that philosophers often have in mind non-intentional properties when they talk about qualia. But ‘qualia’ is also sometimes used merely as a synonym for what-it-is-like properties, where this does not yet specify any particular account of them. So, to be clear about the contrast between Intentionalism and the Mental Paint View, I will stick to talk of intentional versus non-intentional or mental paint properties.

The Mental Paint View is also a common factor view. It says that all types of experience are individuated, partly or wholly, by appeal to mental paint properties. A veridical experience as of a tomato and a matching hallucination are both taken to have certain ‘reddish’ mental paint properties. Again, the mental component is thought to be the same across types of experience and it represents a common factor among these experiences. One can be in the same experiential state – one with these ontological ingredients – regardless of whether one is veridically perceiving, hallucinating or having an illusion. Extrinsic relations between the mental component and the subject’s environment take care of the difference between them.

Lastly, the fourth position – *Naïve Realism* – claims that non-hallucinatory experience is built from an acquaintance relation between the subject and ordinary mind-independent objects. In experience, the mind is thought to reach out all the way to include the objects and properties in the world. Hence, in the case of the tomato-experience, if veridical, the experience includes the tomato itself. Naïve Realists say that when one has such an experience one is directly aware of ordinary objects and their properties (i.e. of the red tomato in our example).

Now, of course, Naïve Realism yields a metaphysics of experience only for veridical perceptions. But what about the other kinds of experience, illusions and hallucinations? In response, proponents of Naïve Realism espouse an overall disjunctive view of experience. *Disjunctivism* rejects the idea that non-hallucinatory experience shares explanatorily significant ontological ingredients with hallucinatory experience and allows for separate accounts to be given of each type of experience. It denies that all types of experience have part of their nature in common and it is therefore not a common factor view.¹⁶

These four positions on the nature of experience – Sense Datum Theory, Intentionalism, the Mental Paint View and Naïve Realism/Disjunctivism – represent the main choices available. They are not mutually exclusive, however. I mentioned already that the Mental Paint View is usually held in conjunction with an Intentionalist view. Another example of a mixed position from the literature is the Intentional Trope View (Sturgeon 2000), a combination of Sense Datum View and Intentionalism. One might also combine Disjunctivism with other views that are standardly common factor views, for example one might hold that veridical experience ought to be given an Intentionalist metaphysics, while hallucinatory experience has to be accounted for in terms of one's acquaintance with sense data. The possibilities are endless. Of course, they need to be adequately motivated to represent genuinely plausible proposals for a view of the metaphysics of experience.

Considerations that play a role in motivating positions include basic metaphysical commitments or preferences, such as materialism or dualism. They also include diverse explanatory tasks. For instance, one important explanatory task of a theory of the nature of experience is often captured in terms of the argument from illusion, or the indistinguishability of the different types of experience from the subject's point of view. An adequate theory has to be able to account for this indistinguishability. Many philosophers hold that it is part of the phenomenology of visual experience. That is, according to them, it is part of what experience is like that one cannot distinguish a veridical perception from a matching hallucination. This thought strongly motivates a common factor view. (Others disagree, though. They hold that subjective indistinguishability is not a phenomenological feature but an epistemic one. It

¹⁶ For defenders of Naïve Realism and Disjunctivism see e.g. Hinton 1973, McDowell 1982, 1986, 1994, Putnam 1994 and Martin 2002b, forthcoming. There is some disagreement among Disjunctivists as to where the illusion disjunct goes. Compare e.g. Hinton and McDowell.

therefore is not a reflection of a common nature but of our inability to make certain discriminations among our own mental states (e.g. Brewer 1999, 229-30).)

In the next two sections I will show that considerations about the phenomenology of visual experience are generally held to form a powerful constraint on theorising about experience and that this conception gives rise to the dominant methodology for constructing a metaphysics of experience.

(4) Phenomenal Adequacy and Introspective Access

In the previous section we saw that philosophical work on visual experience has been – and still is – motivated by a variety of interests. Moreover, we saw that there are very different accounts of the nature of experience on offer. Nonetheless, we can discern a guiding thought in almost all these philosophical approaches to the metaphysics of experience. It is that an adequate account of experience must be true to its phenomenology, that it must ‘do justice to the phenomenology’.¹⁷ I call this the ‘Phenomenal Adequacy’ requirement:

(PA) A metaphysics of visual experience must be true to visual phenomenology.

This is a widely accepted requirement. David Armstrong, for instance, claims that what it is visually like for one is indeterminate in detail. So if there is indeterminacy in how things look, he argues, an account of experience better not have the phenomenological upshot that things look determinate.

The classical case is that of the speckled hen. I may be able to see that it has quite a number of speckles, but unable to see exactly how many speckles it has. The hen has a definite number of speckles, but the perception is a perception of an indeterminate number of speckles. However, this indeterminacy is present in perception generally...¹⁸

It is not so clear what (PA) exactly comes to, though. Note first that one’s reading of (PA) admits of different strengths. A minimal and very weak reading is that an adequate account of experience must merely respect phenomenal character. This is a purely negative requirement.

¹⁷ This latter phrase is used by Armstrong 1968, 221, and Jackson 1977, 116. See also Strawson 1979, 43: ‘[A] strict account of our sensible experience ... should in no way distort or misrepresent the character of that experience as we actually enjoy it, i.e. that it should be a true or faithful account...’

¹⁸ Armstrong 1968, 219-220. The case of the speckled hen was originally proposed to A.J. Ayer by G. Ryle. Ayer 1940 put forward a solution, which was criticised in a review of the book by Price 1941. All of this is discussed Chisholm 1942. That discussion is a good example of (PA) at work.

The idea is that stipulations about the metaphysics of experience must not distort, or be inconsistent with, what experience is like. On this understanding (PA) could be satisfied by any account, as long as there was no incompatibility with what experience is like. A requirement of mere compatibility is philosophically thoroughly uninteresting, however. Suppose someone claims that experience is built from ectoplasm, or from relations to butterflies. None of this would be incompatible with what experience is like. It may be hard to see how experience of this nature could have a certain phenomenal character, but there is not yet anything in the proposal to rule it out either.

Supporters of (PA) must have in mind a stronger reading of it. At a minimum the idea must be that a metaphysics of experience should yield some philosophical grip on phenomenal character. On such a stronger reading, (PA) demands that an account of experience should *render intelligible*, or *make sense of*, its phenomenal character. This asks for something more than mere lack of distortion. It is hard to pin down what counts as meeting (PA) so understood, though. Some hold that phenomenal character ought to be explained by, or reduced to, the metaphysics of experience (Tye 2000, 45). Others think this is too strong and favour some supervenience relation instead (Byrne 2001).

As an aside, it is interesting at this point to consider the relation between (PA) and the so-called 'explanatory gap' between phenomenal and non-phenomenal facts. The explanatory gap consists in the (putative) fact that phenomenology cannot be reductively explained by non-phenomenal facts (Levine 1983; 2001). (PA), however, requires that the metaphysics of experience make sense of its phenomenal character. For this to yield a philosophical grip on phenomenal character, it must be *some* sort of explanation. But if there is an explanatory gap, it cannot be reductive explanation. One is left to wonder what such a non-reductive explanation, as for instance favoured by Byrne, amounts to.¹⁹

Having noted these questions about, and differences in, a stronger reading of (PA), I now want to gloss over them. I propose the following suggestive but deliberately vague formulation for a relevantly stronger reading of (PA): a metaphysics of experience must *underwrite* its phenomenology. The idea is that (PA) must provide a philosophically illuminating grip on phenomenal character.

¹⁹ See Sturgeon 2000, 13ff for relevant discussion

In giving an account of how visual phenomenology is best underwritten, philosophers make claims about what experience is like. But how do they manage this – how do they come by claims about the phenomenology of visual experience? A brief glance at the literature provides the answer. Philosophers assume that our primary grip on what experience is like comes through introspection.²⁰ I call this the ‘Introspective Access’ assumption:

(IA) Our primary grip on phenomenal character comes through introspection.

The introduction of phenomenal character in section (2) hinted at (IA). There I said that beliefs about what experience is like are acquired, in the first instance, through introspection. Moreover, I said the deliverance of introspection is articulated in look-ascriptions. The latter are thus held to capture introspection-based beliefs about the phenomenal character of experience.

The Phenomenal Adequacy requirement and the Introspective Access assumption are not only widely held among philosophers, but together they fuel a methodology standardly used by philosophers to investigate conscious visual experience. This method – from now on ‘the Standard Method’ – has two steps. One is to acquire introspective evidence about the phenomenology of visual experience. The other is to use this evidence to determine a metaphysics of such experience. In essence, introspective evidence is used to construct a metaphysics of visual experience. In the next section I will articulate the Standard Method in some detail.

(5) The Standard Method

Combining (PA) and (IA) yields a compact result: an account of experience must underwrite introspective look-ascriptions. In essence, the Standard Method emerges from this idea. Philosophers take there to be a range of data concerning visual phenomenology that any good account of experience must underwrite. They say we access such data by introspection. When introspecting what experience is like, one forms introspective beliefs about phenomenal experience. These beliefs are held to provide one with data or *introspective evidence* precisely because they are supposed to be formed directly on the basis of what experience is like, i.e. on

²⁰ E.g. Moore 1953, 244; Lycan 1995, 82; Loar 1997, 597; Tye 2000, 51.

the basis of the phenomenology of the experience itself. As such, introspective evidence is held to be unspoilt by theory.

Now, introspective beliefs about phenomenal character are articulated in look-ascriptions. Thus look-ascriptions are thought to articulate introspective evidence. Features mentioned in those look-ascriptions are accordingly taken to be essentially tied to phenomenal character. I call them *phenomenal features*. Phenomenal features are subject to two requirements. They individuate or identify properties of the experience (of phenomenal character). And they themselves are introspectively arrived at on the basis of what experience is like. The thought at the heart of the Standard Method is then simply stated: a good account of experience has to underwrite the phenomenal features mentioned in introspective look-ascriptions. Let me illustrate how this works with an example.

Recall the introspective look-ascription mentioned earlier:

(L) It looks to me as if there is a green cup on a table.

(L) mentions greenness in its content-clause. According to the Standard Method, greenness is a phenomenal feature and therefore one's metaphysics of experience should underwrite it. Different accounts attempt this in different ways. Sense Datum Theorists, we have seen, hold that experience is an acquaintance relation between a subject and special sensory objects. They would say that the phenomenal feature greenness mentioned in (L) is underwritten by a property of the special sensory object with which one is acquainted in having the experience as of a green cup. By contrast, Intentionalists hold that experience is representation. They would say the phenomenal feature of greenness is underwritten by an intentional property that is itself individuated by reference to the property green in the world. Defenders of the Mental Paint View have yet a different proposal. They hold that experience is at least partly built from mental paint properties. Accordingly, on this view the phenomenal feature greenness mentioned by (L) is underwritten by a certain colour-like 'greenish' mental paint property of the experience. Finally, Naïve Realists claim that (veridical) experience is acquaintance between a subject and public objects in the world. They would maintain that, if (L) reports a veridical experience, the phenomenal feature greenness mentioned in it is underwritten by the subject's acquaintance with the actual colour of the seen cup.

In this way, the Standard Method taps into introspectively available features – introspective evidence – to help build a metaphysics of experience. The strategy is to use one's introspective fix on phenomenal character to identify properties in terms of which one can best underwrite visual phenomenology. Thereby, the thought goes, one gains purchase on the key aspect of experience. Introspective evidence thus serves to motivate and ground substantial metaphysical conclusions. It provides a starting point for one's view of the underlying nature of experience.

The literature in this area makes abundantly clear that the Standard Method is shared by proponents of differing views of visual experience. They all moor their position to introspective reflection on the character of experience. Consider these remarks of Price, Levine, Tye and Martin:

When I see a tomato there is much that I can doubt. ... One thing however I cannot doubt [in reflecting on my experience]: that there exists a red patch of a round and somewhat bulgy shape, standing out from a background of other colour-patches, and having a certain visual depth, and that this whole field of colour is directly present to my consciousness. ... This peculiar and ultimate manner of being present to consciousness is called *being given*, and what is thus present is called a [sense] *datum*. ... Thus the term sense-datum is meant to be a neutral term. The use of it does not imply the acceptance of any particular theory. The term is meant to stand for something whose existence is indubitable (however fleeting), something from which all theories of perception ought to start, however much they may diverge later. (Price 1932, 18 & 19)²¹

I maintain, however, that conscious experiences themselves, not merely our verbal judgements about them, are the primary data to which a theory must answer. Of course this means taking the first-person point of view seriously...as a legitimate source of data. I maintain, that is, that I don't just say, or think (in the sense of verbalized judgement) that I am having an experience of a certain sort right now, but I *am* having such an experience. ... From within the subjective point of view I am presented with these qualitative features of experience, or 'qualia,' as they're called in the literature. Reddishness, for instance, is a feature of my experience when I look at my red diskette case. (Levine 2001, 134 & 7)

[I]ntrospection of your perceptual experiences seems to reveal only aspects of *what* you experience, further aspects of the scenes, as represented. Why? The answer, I suggest, is that your perceptual experiences have no *introspectible* features over and above those implicated in their intentional contents. So the phenomenal character of such experiences – itself something that is introspectibly accessible, assuming the appropriate concepts are possessed and there is no cognitive malfunction – is identical with, or contained within, their intentional contents. (Tye 1995, 136)

[Naïve Realism] is put forward on the grounds that it gives an accurate description of how the subject's situation strikes her when consciously perceiving. Focusing on the tower, I can note its distinctive shape and colouring; turning my attention inward, and reflecting on the character of my looking at the tower, I can note that the tower does not disappear from the centre of my

²¹ Price does not talk about introspecting experience, but it is clear that he has in mind first-person reflection on one's experience. He says, e.g., that ultimately acknowledgement of sense data depends on 'appeal to every man's own consciousness'. (6)

attention. The tower is not replaced by some surrogate, whose existence is merely internal to my mind, not are its various apparent properties, its shape and colours, replaced by some merely subjective qualities. So my perceiving is not only a way of providing me with information about an external world, when my attention and interest is directed towards action and the world; in its very conscious and so subjective character, the experience seems literally to include the world. (Martin 1997, 84)

These quotes illustrate that the Standard Method spreads through much work in this area.²² This introspection-based methodology for constructing a theory of the nature of visual experience may be considered attractive for several reasons. For one thing, there is the simplicity of it. By exploiting introspective knowledge we are all assumed to have of our own experience, the Standard Method supposedly provides us with an easy way in, an uncomplicated means to identify the ontological ingredients of experience. Moreover, constraining one's theory with the help of introspective evidence about phenomenal character guides the aim of the theoretician. Constraints from phenomenology are held to ensure that the theory really explains the target of explanation. If one follows the Standard Method, the thought goes, one cannot be accused that one's theory fails to be a theory of those phenomena we would ordinarily group together under the label 'experience'.

But most importantly, the Standard Method aims to furnish one's metaphysics of experience with a certain justification or authority. A metaphysics that is arrived at via the Standard Method is meant to be phenomenally adequate. Such a view is thought to have a significant edge over rivals. After all, those rivals are accused of getting the phenomenology of experience wrong – they are accused of endorsing a mismatch between how things strike us when we introspect experience and what the rivals say experience is really like. A mismatch of this kind is said to turn the rival view into a form of error theory about phenomenal character. According to a proponent of the Standard Method, however, the more error attributed, the less phenomenally adequate and hence less plausible a metaphysics of experience becomes. But phenomenal adequacy, as we have seen, is not deemed to be optional. It is considered a very serious criticism of a view that it 'flies in the face of phenomenology' (Shoemaker 1996b, 250). By the same token, a metaphysics that *is* conservative with respect to what experience is like (i.e. that is phenomenally adequate) is thought to procure significant justification by that very fact. And the Standard Method is widely held as the best way to ensure such justification.

²² The quotes show furthermore that philosophers hold *conflicting* views about what introspective reflection on the phenomenology of experience tells one. Contrast, for instance, Levine's and Tye's claims about what introspection reveals: that it is as if properties of the experience are presented to one; and that it is as if only mind-independent objects and their properties are presented to one. The fact that philosophers hold conflicting views on what introspection reveals about phenomenal character will become significant in chapter 5.

The last point of attraction becomes even clearer when we look at two potential underlying assumptions, either of which are likely to make someone amenable to using an introspection-based methodology.²³ One is the Cartesian assumption of the transparency of the mind. Transparency of the mind in the Cartesian sense consists of two conditions. The first is that a subject's beliefs about her own mental states are infallible. In other words, if a subject believes that she is in mental state M, then it is true that she is in M. The second condition is that her mental states are self-intimating. This means that if a subject is in mental state M then she believes that she is in M. Hence, to assume that the mind is transparent is to hold that one cannot be in error about the content of one's mind and that one knows everything that is part of the content of one's mind. It is easy to see how this assumption makes for sympathy with the Standard Method. If knowledge of the contents of our mind is infallible and self-intimating, why should this not involve knowledge of the structure and nature of mental states? The faith in our introspective powers demonstrated by the Cartesian finds resonance in the Standard Method.

But one need not be a Cartesian about introspective knowledge in order to be attracted to the Standard Method. The other assumption is that introspection can be a species of empirical inquiry about mental phenomena. In introspection one has a direct access to one's experience. One can directly observe, in an appropriately empirical sense of observation, certain facts about experience. Specifically, we can introspectively discover or learn about what experience is like. In turn, the phenomenological data are considered empirical data, empirical facts that need to be explained by one's theory.²⁴ Again, it is not difficult to see how the Standard Method may seem appealing to those holding this assumption. They will hold that the Standard Method involves a perfectly legitimate of first-person empirical inquiry about one's mind. Moreover, it also aims to satisfy the demand that these empirical facts need to be explained by one's theory.

Given these two assumptions, jointly or separately, we can see why one would hold that a theory of experience arrived at via the Standard Method has some special justification. The use of phenomenal adequacy as a constraint requires phenomenology to be accessible. Both of the

²³ Baldwin 1990, 157-8, for instance, explains G.E. Moore's ready use of introspection by appeal to both of these assumptions.

²⁴ See, e.g. Broad 1965a, 89; Firth 1965, 226 & 234; Tye 2000, 35.

assumptions involve the idea that we have excellent first-personal access to the phenomenal character of our experiences.

(6) Outline of what is to come

Having laid out and articulated the details of the Standard Method, in the rest of this thesis I will attack it. Specifically, I argue that the assumption central to this methodology – that we have a good grip on visual phenomenology in introspection – is mistaken. My strategy comes in two parts. The first is to undermine important particular claims philosophers have made about how to characterise what experience is like. I discuss the two main introspection-based claims about visual phenomenology found in the literature. After setting out each claim, I show that they are either useless in theory-construction or highly questionable. The first is the claim that experience is transparent in introspection. Discussion of this claim takes up chapters 2 and 3. First, I will argue that the ‘transparency of experience’ as it is put forward by most philosophers actually comprises two independent claims that are run together. I then look at each of these sub-claims separately. The second main claim about phenomenology found in the literature is that it introspectively appears as if experience presents us with actually existing objects. I will discuss it in chapter 4.

The second part of my strategy is to criticise the introspection-based methodology directly (Chapter 5). Use of the Standard Method presupposes that we have appropriate introspective access to the phenomenology of experience. I argue, however, that our access to the required kind of introspective evidence is extremely problematic for certain general reasons. But without such evidence the Standard Method cannot be applied legitimately – use of it becomes instant misuse.

By the end of chapter 5, the task of this thesis is finished and the case against the Standard Method is made. My rejection of the Standard Method raises important questions, though. In the last chapter – chapter 6 – I will answer some of them and provide a little speculation in response to others.

Chapter 2

Transparency I: Looking Through

(1) Introduction

Currently the most popular claim about what experience is like is the claim that experience is ‘transparent’ or ‘diaphanous’. Philosophers who appeal to this claim talk about ‘the transparency of experience’, or ‘phenomenal transparency’, or ‘the diaphanousness of experience’. Some even put forward what they term ‘the argument from transparency’. In this chapter and the next I discuss and reject this appeal to transparency.

In sections (2) and (3) of this chapter, I investigate exactly what claim or claims are being put forward under the heading of transparency. I argue that there are two independent claims. My analysis of the appeal to the transparency of experience and its role in arguing for, or motivating, particular views of the metaphysics of experience is based on my analysis of each of these two claims. The first of them is discussed in sections (4) and (6) of this chapter. The second becomes the object of detailed investigation in chapter 3.

A brief overview of the structure of my attack on the appeal to transparency is in order. I argue in the present chapter that even if the first claim is held to be acceptable, it can be accommodated by almost all views of experience. That is to say, if it were used in the Standard Method, it would do nothing to suggest one view of the metaphysics of experience rather than another. The second claim, on the other hand, is not neutral in this sense. If accepted, it can serve to establish, or strongly motivate, the falsity of Sense Datum Theory and the Mental Paint View. As we shall see in the next chapter, though, this second claim is unacceptable. My overall diagnosis, in a nutshell, is this: appeals to the transparency of experience run together two claims; they obtain acceptability from the first and philosophical firepower from the second. However, each on their own, the first claim does not do any significant work and the second is not acceptable.

In rejecting the transparency of experience, I realise that I assault current philosophical orthodoxy. People’s first reaction to any such announcement on my part is often to give me the Incredulous Stare. My task is therefore to cast significant doubt on entrenched assumption. In this chapter I argue that one cannot legitimately make this assumption. But I would consider myself already somewhat successful if my arguments persuade a fan of transparency

that it cannot simply be taken for granted and that establishing it is much more difficult than taking a quick introspective glance at one's visual experiences.

(2) Transparency

Consider the following three quotations from Tye, Shoemaker and Dretske respectively:

Why is it that perceptual experiences are transparent? When you turn your gaze inward and try to focus your attention on intrinsic features of these experiences, why do you always seem to end up attending to what the experiences are *of*? Suppose you have a visual experience of a shiny, blood-soaked dagger. Whether, like Macbeth, you are hallucinating or whether you are seeing a real dagger, you experience redness and shininess as outside you, as covering the surface of a dagger. Now try to become aware of your experience itself, inside you, apart from its objects. Try to focus your attention on some intrinsic feature of the experience that distinguishes it from other experiences, something other than what it is an experience *of*. The task seems impossible: one's awareness seems always to slip through the experience to the redness and shininess, as instantiated together externally. In turning one's mind inward to attend to the experience, one seems to end up scrutinizing external features or properties. (Tye 1995: 135-6)

The only thing that seems to answer to the description "attending introspectively to one's visual experience" is attending to how things appear to one visually; and offhand this seems to tell one what the representational content of one's experience is without telling one anything about what the non-intentional features of one's experience are that encode this content. One may be inclined to say that one is revelling in the qualitative of phenomenal character of one's experience when one "drinks in" the blue of a summery sky or the red of a ripe tomato. But neither the blue nor the red is an object of *introspective* awareness; these are experienced perceptually rather than introspectively, as located outside one, in the sky or in the tomato, not as features of one's experience. (Shoemaker 1996a: 100-101)

Representational Naturalism ... helps one understand, for example, why conscious experiences have that peculiar diaphanous quality – the quality of always being present *when*, but never *where*, one looks to find them. ... If one is asked to say what one's current visual experiences are like, for example, one seems able to know this without having any identifiable experiences other than the visual ones one is able to describe. If one is asked to introspect one's current gustatory experience – "Tell us, if you can, exactly how the wine tastes" – one finds oneself attending, not to one's experience of the wine, but to the wine itself (or perhaps the tongue or palette (sic)). There seems to be no other relevant place to direct one's attention. (Dretske 1995, xiii, 62)

All three of these philosophers appeal to the transparency of experience. What role does such an appeal play in theorising about experience? The transparency of experience is generally considered to be a claim about the phenomenology of experience. Moreover, some treat it as a premise in an argument – let us call it the Argument From Transparency. There are different versions of this argument on offer and opinions differ as to what it is supposed to establish.

The Argument From Transparency has a negative and a positive use (Martin 2002b). The Argument from Transparency may be considered a negative argument showing that Sense Datum Theory and/or the Mental Paint view are mistaken. For, the negative argument goes, when one reflects on one's experience, there is no introspective evidence for either sense data or mental paint properties. Therefore, views of the nature of experience that postulate these kinds of entities, on the one hand are not motivated, and on the other involve an error theory about what experience is like. In the terminology introduced in chapter 1, proponents of the argument aim to show that Sense Datum Theory and/or the Mental Paint view are phenomenally inadequate. The Argument From Transparency may also be put forward as a positive argument to show that a certain metaphysics of experience is correct. In this capacity, it is most commonly used by Intentionalists. As proponents of the positive argument they claim that introspective reflection reveals only what is represented in experience and that intentional properties are the ideal candidates to account for this. However, most Intentionalists putting forward the Argument From Transparency fail to realise that some philosophers hold that the argument supports Naïve Realism at least as well, if not better (Martin 2002b). The latter insist that there is introspective evidence only for the existence of naïve properties, viz. sensory properties of ordinary physical objects. Proponents of the positive argument, whether arguing for Intentionalism or Naïve Realism, aim to establish that their theory is phenomenally adequate.

Stoljar (forthcoming) proposes yet a different version, according to which the Argument From Transparency is held to establish what he calls 'the relational thesis'. The relational thesis says that phenomenal character is entirely determined by – and therefore accountable in terms of – objects and properties to which one is related in experience. Clearly, both Naïve Realism and Sense Datum Theory are compatible with the relational thesis. On both of these accounts one is related to certain objects and their properties in having an experience; ordinary ones in the former, special ones in the latter. The relational thesis therefore says that phenomenal character is determined by ordinary objects and their properties, or special objects and their properties respectively. Moreover, Stoljar holds that Intentionalism is also compatible with the relational thesis. On the Intentionalist view, according to Stoljar, in having an experience one is related to an intentional object, such as a property or a proposition. In this case, then, the relational thesis says that phenomenal character is determined exclusively by features of the intentional object, i.e. the property or proposition in question. Now, views incompatible with the relational thesis are Adverbialism and the Mental Paint view. Adverbialists hold that in

experience the subject's sensing is modified in certain ways. In having an experience as of something red the subject senses red-ly. On this view, one is not related to any object of experience. A fortiori, phenomenal character cannot be determined by any object of experience one is related to. The Mental Paint view, on the other hand, does not necessarily rule out that in experience one is related to some object. But, it holds that phenomenal character is at least partially explained by properties that are not properties of the objects one is related to in having the experience. Hence, if the Argument From Transparency is held to establish the relational thesis, it is an argument against Adverbialism and the Mental Paint view. Or, by the same token, it is an argument designed to establish either Naïve Realism, Sense Datum Theory or Intentionalism.

I am not concerned with the exact details of these various versions of the Argument From Transparency. In passing, I want to make one quick comment on Stoljar's third version of the argument, though. I am surprised to find Intentionalism included among those views that endorse the relational thesis. Stoljar says that Intentionalists hold that experiences have intentional objects. Although Intentionalists in general would agree with this, I do not think that many would say that we are related to them in any real sense of relation. The intentional object of my experience as of a green cup on the table before me is a cup. It has certain properties, such as being green, being situated on the table, etc. But, on the Intentionalist view, I am not related thereby to any particular cup in my perceptual environment in any straightforward sense – after all, I could have the same experience without any cup actually being there before me. So if I am related – in the real sense of relation – to an intentional object it is not going to be an ordinary cup in the world. But this seems to be what my experience is about. All sorts of worries arise at this point that are not the topic of discussion. (See Crane 2001, 13-33; Thau 2002, ch.2).

At any rate, to regard an appeal to transparency as part of an *argument* is not obligatory. Some who make an appeal to transparency may be better understood as merely taking themselves to put forward a powerful consideration or motivation for or against certain views (e.g. Tye 2000). According to these people, recognition of the transparency of experience ought to incline one strongly to hold some view and not others. The idea is perhaps that such a view furnishes the best explanation of the phenomenon. But this is not considered a knock-down argument.

In the end, the exact form of reasoning matters little to my discussion. For, whether the appeal to transparency is part of an argument proper, or merely of some strong motivational considerations, it begins with specific claims about what experience is like. These phenomenological claims are then used to argue or provide motivation for or against certain views of the nature of experience. In this sense, all these uses form an instance of the Standard Method. At this stage I am interested in the first step: the particular claims about phenomenal character put forward. Specifically, I am focusing here on the popular claim that introspection of what experience is like reveals that experience is transparent.

(3) Two claims

At least two separate claims can be distinguished among what is commonly put forward under the transparency heading. The first is a claim about the peculiar way in which we are introspectively aware of phenomenal character. It says that when one attends to what experience is like, one winds up attending to what experience is about. What we are aware of in such a case are objects of experience and their properties. Hence experience is peculiar in that when attending to what it is like, we seem to *look through* experience to what it is an experience as of. All three of the philosophers quoted above make this claim. Tye says that when ‘turning your gaze inward ...you always seem to end up attending to what the experiences are *of*’. Shoemaker holds that introspective reflection seems to tell one only ‘what the representational content of one’s experience is’. And, finally, Dretske maintains that ‘conscious experiences have that peculiar diaphanous quality – the quality of always being present *when*, but never *where*, one looks to find them.’

What can be looked through has the property of being transparent or diaphanous. In my opinion, the label ‘transparency of experience’ should really be reserved for this first claim. But to avoid terminological confusion I will call it ‘the Looking-through claim’:

(LT) Introspection of what experience is like reveals only what experience is about.

However, the three quotations all contain a further claim. It picks up where the previous one stops. This second claim is about *what* one is aware of in introspection, given that one looks through experience to what experience is as of. And, it says experience presents us with ordinary mind-independent objects and their properties in the world. When reflecting on what experience is like one’s awareness is best characterised in terms of ordinary objects and their

properties. Again, we can find this claim in all three of the philosophers quoted above. Tye is very explicit; he insists that we are aware of properties ‘as instantiated externally’. Likewise, Shoemaker maintains that we are aware of properties ‘as located outside one’.²⁵ Dretske says that in introspection ‘one finds oneself attending, not to one’s experience of the wine, but to the wine itself...’

Although this claim takes its cue from the observation that experience is transparent, the label ‘transparency of experience’ is inappropriate here, since it goes beyond the thought that one looks through experience. Rather, I call it ‘the mind-independence claim’:

(MI) Introspection of what visual experience is like reveals that it looks as if mind-independent objects and their properties are before one.

The two claims are obviously not equivalent. One can hold the first, without holding the second.²⁶ Nonetheless, as we have seen above, (LT) and (MI) are usually run together.²⁷

Having distinguished the two claims, I postpone detailed discussion of (MI) to the next chapter. For the rest of this chapter, I turn my attention to (LT). Let me give you an outline of this discussion. In the next section I set out this claim about phenomenal character and discuss its motivations. I will also argue that it is neutral between different views of the nature of experience – all the four major views can accommodate it just fine. In the subsequent section, I examine how far (LT) itself is acceptable and suggest that despite initial appearances there are worries that should lead one to accept only a considerably weaker version of it. In the last section of this chapter I discuss and criticise a particular argument for Intentionalism that relies on (LT).

²⁵ Tye and Shoemaker both use spatial terms, i.e. ‘external’ and ‘located outside one’. I interpret their use of these terms as connoting one’s awareness of an objective, or mind-independent world. For more on this, see chapter 3.

²⁶ An expression of just (LT) can be found in Grice 1962, 144. ‘[S]uch experiences...as seeing and feeling seem to be, as it were, diaphanous: if we were asked to pay close attention, on a given occasion, to our seeing or feeling as distinct from what has been seen or felt, we should not know how to proceed; and the attempt to describe the differences between seeing and feeling seems to dissolve into a description of what we see and what we feel.’ Also, Byrne 2001 (see section (6) below for discussion).

²⁷ See also Harman 1990, 39: ‘When Eloise sees a tree before her, the colors she experiences are all experienced as features of the tree and its surroundings. None of them are experienced as intrinsic features of her experience. And that is true of you, too. ... Look at a tree and try to turn our attention to intrinsic features of your visual experience. I predict you will find that the only features there to turn your attention to will be features of the presented tree, including relational features of the tree ‘from here.’ And Lycan 1995, 88: ‘Bodily sensation are themselves conceived as feelings, while perceptual states are not; as Harman (1990) observes, we normally “see right through” perceptual states to external objects and do not even notice that we are *in* perceptual states.’

(4) Looking-through

Consider (LT) – what are the reasons for accepting it? Why should one hold that in introspection one looks through experience to what it is as of? There are two popular arguments in favour of (LT). The first focuses on the objects one attends to in having an experience and in introspection of such experience. For example, Tye (1995) asks us to consider what happens when one shifts one's attention from observing a scene to what it is like to have such an experience as of that scene. He points out that not much happens: when one focuses on phenomenal character one seems to wind up focussing on what the experience is about, namely the scene before one's eyes.²⁸ The suggestion is, then, that in introspecting one's experience, one is not thereby aware of a *new* set of objects and properties, replacing the objects and properties one is aware of when observing the scene before one's eyes. But if the objects of one's awareness do not change when shifting attention, one has no good reason to claim that one is aware of anything other than what experience is about.

The other argument focuses on how one best ought to characterise phenomenal character. Strawson (1979), for instance, holds that the best characterisation of what experience is like employs the same terms that one would use to describe what experience is about.

In this way... I use the perceptual claim – the claim it was natural to make in the circumstances – in order to characterise my experience, without actually making the claim. ... And this is really the best possible way of characterising the experience. (44)

The idea is that if one did not do this, one would be falsifying or misrepresenting the character of the experience. But, again, if the terms in which one characterises what experience is like are the same as those in which one characterises what one's experience is about one has no good reason to claim that one is aware of anything other than what experience is about.

Both of these arguments are designed to convince us that introspection of what experience is like merely affords awareness of what the experience is about.²⁹ But what grounds them? They

²⁸ As Tye 1995, 30 puts it, "one's [introspective] awareness seems always to slip through the experience to blueness and squareness, as instantiated together in an external object. In turning one's mind inward to attend to the experience, one seems to end up concentrating on what is outside again, on external features or properties. ... introspection does not seem to reveal any further distinctive features of the experience over and above what one experiences" Also, Harman 1990, 39.

²⁹ Both Tye and Strawson hold that we are presented with the mind-independent world in experience. So, on Tye's view, the objects we are aware when we shift attention to what experience is like are mind-independent objects. On Strawson's view, the concepts that we employ in describing what experience is like are part of a

are both direct appeals to what experience is like. In putting forward these arguments, proponents aim to draw attention to what they take to be a fact about visual phenomenology. They give us instructions for how to introspect and they provide a prediction of what one will be aware of when one follows these instructions. They hold that the phenomenal fact in question is readily apparent or obvious when reflecting on experience. Tye feels that it is obvious on introspective reflection that the only objects one attends to are those objects the experience is about. Strawson maintains it is obvious on introspective reflection that the best characterisation of what experience is like employs the same vocabulary that one uses to characterise what experience is about. This way to defend (LT) is to hold that (LT) is obvious from reflection on visual phenomenology.

One might try a different tack in defending (LT).³⁰ The idea is to shed light on the alleged phenomenal fact by looking at our ordinary conception of experience. In contrast to mere statement of phenomenal fact, one might seek an explanation of why awareness does not seem to change its objects in introspection of phenomenal character, or why the same terms should be used to characterise what experience is about and what experience is like. Defence of (LT) along the following lines certainly yields a deeper understanding of the relation between what experience is about and what experience is like.

It is argued that an essential part of our ordinary conception of some mental states is that they provide the subject with a viewpoint on something (Crane 2001, ch.1). Suppose you have a belief about some state of affairs, such as the belief that Havana is the capital of Cuba. Being in such a belief state provides you with a viewpoint on a fact about the world, i.e. that Havana is the capital of Cuba. Now, to introspect one's mental state is to attend to it from the first-person perspective. In the case of the kind of mental state just described, this will involve being introspectively aware of the point of view provided by the state. But to know a point of view one needs to know what it is a viewpoint on, i.e. what it is about. Hence, introspectively attending to a mental state such as a belief enjoins attending to what it is about.³¹

common sense realist conceptual scheme. Again, this aspect of the appeal to transparency will be discussed in chapter 3.

³⁰ Material for such a defence of (LT) can be found in Martin 1998.

³¹ This is perhaps not quite right. Could one not know introspectively that one is in a particular mental state but not know what it is about? One might be merely quasi-demonstratively aware of the state. For example, that state (I am in now), whichever it is. I am not sure. It is not clear whether this would really count as introspective awareness.

Our ordinary conception of experience may then be thought to follow a similar pattern. In virtue of having an experience the subject is provided with a (visual) viewpoint on something. Suppose you have an experience with a certain subject-matter. (Recall, ‘subject-matter’ is a neutral term for the information one is immediately supplied by experience. It is important to note that no specific view as to what such subject-matter involves is put forward here.) Having an the experience provides you with a viewpoint on its subject-matter. Introspecting the phenomenal character of one’s experience is attending to what experience is like from the first person. Such introspection involves awareness of the viewpoint provided by experience. Again, to know a point of view involves knowing what it is a viewpoint on. Therefore, introspectively attending to what experience is like enjoins attending to the subject-matter of experience.

Interestingly, Martin (1998) finds confirmation that a conception along these lines is the right one for the job by appeal to phenomenology. He contrasts this conception with the view of experience espoused by Adverbialism. Adverbialists regard experience merely as a way of being modified. Introspective knowledge of what it is like, on their view, is knowledge of those modifications. So, for example, if one has an experience as of something blue, in introspection one would be aware of one’s sensing blue-ly. Crucially, it is not awareness of the subject-matter of experience. Martin argues that the Adverbialist picture results in an unacceptable account of what it is like for one. For, he claims, it does not in fact seem phenomenally adequate to think of what experience is like in absence of what it is of. The Adverbialist conception of experience thus violates phenomenal fact.³²

Even if, with Martin, one uses appeal to phenomenology to confirm this proposal, the latter still constitutes an explanation in its own right, not *based* on an appeal to phenomenology. After all, proponents could find confirmation of this conception of experience from some source other than appeal to visual phenomenology, such as support from ordinary language.

³² ‘However... when we think about sensory states such as visual experience ... we cannot separate our knowledge of what it is like to be in that state from knowledge of the subject-matter presented to one in being in such a state of mind. But that suggests for all such experience that our awareness of what the experience is like is inextricably bound up with knowledge of what is presented to one in having such experience.’ Martin 1998, 173. As he puts it in another place (Martin manuscript), since the Adverbialist refuses to appeal to presented subject-matter, the problem with their account of what experience is like is that they simply appear to change topic.

Now, on the one hand, we can use the conceptual explanation to strengthen (LT)'s plausibility. It constitutes an explanation and not merely an appeal to alleged phenomenological fact. Indeed, the latter may be regarded as anchored in our ordinary conception of experience. On the other hand, we can see that this explanation makes for a weaker version of (LT). The conceptual explanation only requires that introspective reflection on what experience is like involves attention to the subject-matter of experience. It does not demand that this is *all* that we are aware of in introspectively attending to experience. The conceptual explanation is therefore not sufficient to rule out that we are introspectively aware of anything besides the subject-matter of experience. If motivated by the conceptual explanation, (LT) must be revised to yield

(LT*) Introspection of what experience is like reveals what experience is about.

The difference between (LT) and (LT*) is significant for the kind of constraint that is imposed on theory construction. The former holds that phenomenal character ought to be characterised *exclusively* in terms of what experience is about. The latter requires that *at least some part* of phenomenal character ought to be characterised in terms of what experience is about. (One might also wonder whether (LT*) demands that there is an 'all' – i.e. whether introspection of experience reveals everything that experience is about.)

Note also that the full weight of establishing (LT) rather than (LT*) falls on an appeal to phenomenology. A proponent of (LT) might respond that there is nothing wrong with that. There could be division of labour. The conceptual explanation is useful in supplying us with the basic understanding of the relationship between introspection of phenomenal character and the subject-matter of experience. It explains why characterisation of phenomenal character involves characterisation of what experience is about. Appeal to phenomenology provides us with the exclusivity claim: characterisation of phenomenal character involves no more than characterising of what experience is about. Of course, the other option for the proponent of (LT) is to go just with appeal to phenomenology. Phenomenology, on her view, may be a perfectly satisfactory grounding for (LT). Either way, I will discuss how (little) I rate the chances of success for any such appeal to phenomenology in the next section.

For now, let me stress what one is, and what one is not, committed to in accepting (LT). Importantly, it does not involve any commitment as to *how* the subject-matter is characterised.

(LT) just says that introspective reflection on what experience is like reveals merely what experience is about. Two theorists with radically different views of the subject-matter of experience can agree (LT) is true. Consider two very different views of what experience is about. A classic Sense Datum Theorist holds that experience presents us with instances of colours and shapes. Price, for example, says that proper scrutiny of what an experience of a tomato presents to one shows ‘that there exists a red patch of a round and somewhat bulgy shape’ (1932, 3). Intentionalists, on the other hand, tend to insist that in experience the world is presented as being a certain way. In this vein, McGinn maintains that ‘[i]n having perceptual experience the world seems to us to be a certain way; it presents itself to our experience as containing various objects and their properties’ (1989, 58). Both Price and McGinn can accommodate (LT). Given their respective characterisations of what experience is about, they only have to hold that introspective reflection of what experience is like reveals no more than that. Thus, Price would hold that introspection shows that phenomenal character is best characterised in terms of variously shaped and coloured patches. McGinn would say that introspection shows that phenomenal character is best characterised in terms of ordinary objects and their properties. Clearly, acceptance of (LT) is neutral between different characterisations of the subject-matter of experience.

This neutrality makes (LT) not very useful when it comes to the Standard Method. (LT) does not specify *which* is the right characterisation of the subject-matter of experience to be employed in a characterisation of what experience is like. Apart from ruling out Adverbialism, all the four main contenders – Sense Datum Theory, Intentionalism, the Mental Paint view and Naïve Realism are still in play. We have just seen this in the case of Sense Datum Theory and Intentionalism. Clearly, Naïve Realism is also compatible with (LT). For the latter position holds that all we are aware of in introspection of what experience is like is ordinary mind-independent objects and their properties. It is less straightforward to see how the Mental Paint View can be regarded as compatible with (LT), but I think it can. There are two possibilities. One of them is to hold that what experience is about includes certain information about the experience itself. Searle (1983), who claims that the subject-matter of experience contains a self-referential element, might perhaps be thought to have such a view. The other possibility is to say that although what experience is about includes mental paint properties, in having the experience one is not aware of them as properties of the experience. Instead, the thought is, one projects these properties onto the world. An example of this kind of position may perhaps be found in Boghossian and Velleman 1997a who hold that colour properties are properties of

experience that are projected onto external objects. Shoemaker 1996b, too, holds that there are mental paint properties, but that this is not obvious in introspection. (He motivates their presence in terms of thought experiments, such as the inverted spectrum.) Both these possibilities allow for the subject-matter of experience to include mental paint properties.

One might attempt to argue that despite its neutrality on a characterisation of subject-matter, (LT) still establishes Intentionalism. The idea is that whatever the subject-matter of experience is, it can be accounted for by intentional content. What experience is about is what experience represents. Thus, whether experience is about ordinary objects and their properties in the world or whether it is about sense data, mental paint properties, or a combination of all these, intentional properties take care of it. Byrne 2001 may be thought to provide an argument along these lines. I will discuss this argument in the last section of this chapter.

(5) Some doubts about (LT)

I now want to articulate some worries about the prospect of establishing (LT) by appeal to phenomenology. These worries apply whether one holds that appeal to phenomenology merely bridges the gap between (LT*) and (LT), or whether one thinks that it establishes (LT) on its own. There are two main points I want to discuss. They both emerge when we try to understand in more detail what is required for (LT) to be so established.

Worry 1

Consider again the argument that the objects and properties one is aware of do not appear to change when shifting from attending to what is experienced to introspective attention of what such experience is like. Tye says:

If you are attending to how things look to you, as opposed to how they are independent of how they look, you are bringing to bear your faculty of introspection. But in so doing, you are not aware of any inner object or thing. The only objects of which you are aware are the external ones making up the scene before your eyes. Nor ... are you directly aware of any qualities of your experience. Your experience is thus transparent to you. (Tye 2000, 46-7)

Tye claims that in introspection all one is aware of are objects and properties that are part of the scene before one's eyes. Reflecting on visual phenomenology supposedly shows that there is no more to one's first-person awareness of phenomenal character than one's awareness of

what experience is about. This seems to involve a comparison between phenomenal character and what experience is about. How might such a comparison be accomplished?

Tye calls what experience is about 'the scene before your eyes'. In other places, he uses the phrase 'the content of experience' (Tye 1992, 160). He thus assumes that the content of my experience – the subject-matter of my current visual experience – is equivalent to the scene before my eyes. Or perhaps more accurately, he seems to think that in order to characterise the content of experience one simply needs to look around and characterise one's perceptual environment. We have therefore an easy way to characterise what experience is about by characterising the scene before one's eyes. So, returning to the idea that (LT) is established by performing a comparison, the following suggestion might be found in Tye: one compares what one is introspectively aware of with one's awareness of the scene before one's eyes.

But let us concentrate on the apparently effortless move from what experience is about to the scene before one's eyes. I am not sure we can simply take it for granted in this context. My worry is that all sorts of descriptions count as a characterisation of the scene before one's eyes. For example, one might include people's intentions and emotions in how one characterises a scene: 'Sabrina is chasing the pig angrily through the garden, waving her arms in frustration and trying to corner the little scoundrel.' Or, one might incorporate one's background knowledge and beliefs about things seen. An ornithologist might observe the following: 'The male flamingo performs a spectacular mating dance in front of the females.' Jones might point out a man at the bar to Smith, 'there is a liar drinking Guinness.' All these are perfectly good characterisations of the scene before one's eyes. Each can also be thought of as the potential subject-matter of some state, utterance or sentence. But can they be taken to be the subject-matter of a given experience? Opinions diverge as to whether emotions, intentions or something's being a mating dance can be part of what is literally seen. Depending on one's view, a characterisation of the scene before one's eyes may diverge significantly from the characterisation of the subject-matter of experience. For the purposes of establishing (LT), however, we have to make sure that when we characterise the former, we are indeed capturing the latter.

How could one go about this task? One natural suggestion is that one resort to introspective reflection on experience to help finding out what experience is about. One reflects on one's experience while undergoing it and this way one might be able to decide what in the scene

before one's eyes is part of the visual presentation. Especially if (LT) is true, there should be no trouble: according to it introspection merely reveals what experience is about. But, obviously, this is not going to work for the task at hand. If introspectively reflecting on what experience is like reveals merely what experience is about, (LT) is true. Then we can find out easily about the subject-matter of experience in introspection. But how is it determined that (LT) is true? This is the question we set out to explore in the first place. It seems that we cannot use introspection to tell us about the correct characterisation of the subject-matter of experience if we want the latter to figure in a comparison with introspective awareness. What we need for the comparison to be non-circular is some *non-introspective* way of getting a grip on the subject-matter of experience.

Do we have any non-introspective way of singling out a characterisation of the subject-matter of experience? Well, of course, as philosophers and as ordinary people we all have views about what can be part of a visual presentation of a scene. For example, most people would agree that being a liar, or liar-ness cannot be part of a visual presentation. Liar-ness is not a visible property. We do sometimes speak of being able to see that someone is lying. However, what is meant by this is that one can see the tell-tale behavioural signs that your average person exhibits when lying, e.g. blushing, squirming around uncomfortably, or perhaps, a shifty look in the eyes. None of these behavioural characteristics are thought to constitute lying. On the other hand, being a round shape, or roundness is usually judged to be a visible property. While roundness is generally considered a visible property, this does not mean that people would expect to be able to see a round object the size of an electron. A visible property has to be of the right scale. Although there is probably a lot of agreement on what counts as a visible property among ordinary people, there will also be plenty of disagreement. Relying on our intuitive view will certainly not produce stable results in this matter. Now, perhaps there is a physical theory or a theory of psychology or some other kind about what makes for a visible property. Such a theory might be extracted from common practice or be corrective of it (or both). If there were such a theory, then one could use it to tell one in a given case which characterisation of the scene before one's eyes also captured the subject-matter of experience. But one would have to know this theory first in order to successfully manage the comparison. And (LT) is supposedly available to anyone merely by introspectively attending to experience from the first-person perspective. One would not expect this to include mastery of what would

be a fairly complicated theory. At the very least, proponents of (LT) would be guilty of considerable misadvertisement.³³

In sum, characterising the scene before one's eyes and characterising the subject-matter of experience are not automatically the same. This creates a problem for a comparison between what experience is about and introspective awareness of phenomenal character. Both, introspective as well as non-introspective ways of getting a grip on the subject-matter of experience are unhelpful. We therefore cannot use any comparison between awareness of the subject-matter of experience and introspective awareness to establish (LT). Talk in terms of 'the scene before one's eyes' obscures this problem.

But a proponent of (LT) – Tye included – might not have in mind any comparison implicit or explicit. Instead, they might say that we are *brutely* aware of the fact that introspective reflection on experience merely reveals what such experience is about. It is simply obvious in introspection that this is the case and no comparison is needed. On this view, appeal to phenomenology establishes (LT) by supplying us with brute awareness of it.

But that does not seem very plausible. Such brute awareness would furnish one with awareness of two facts. One would come to a view as to what experience is about. Moreover, one would learn that what experience is like is nothing over and above what it is about. Together these two facts we are supposed to learn in introspection amount to a fairly sophisticated package. I think that the claim that we become aware of complex states of affair like these does not sit well with holding that this kind of introspective awareness is brute. Brute knowledge or awareness tends to go with more simple and primitive fact. So, although saying that one is brutally aware of these complicated facts concerning (LT) is not incoherent, it is not very persuasive either.

Worry 2

I want to discuss a further worry about (LT). Recall (LT*), the weaker claim that awareness of subject-matter of experience is an essential part of introspective awareness of what experience is like. I noted that this does not exclude the possibility that one is introspectively aware of more than the state's subject-matter. Now I want to suggest that there is good reason to hold

³³ See chapter 5 for a development of this theme.

that something along these lines is positively required. For there must be *a* difference between ordinary awareness of what one is experiencing and introspective awareness of what it is like to undergo that experience. Attending to what one is presented with and introspectively attending to what it is visually like to be so presented to are not the same. The first is perceptually attending to things in the world, the other is introspectively attending to one's own mind. Even if attention to the latter requires some attention to the former, something needs to mark the difference. Specifically, in introspecting one's experience, there must be *some sense* in which one becomes aware of one's experience. This seems to be required in order to be able to know, on the basis of introspection, that one is aware of the subject-matter of experience and not merely of something in one's environment.

Can a defender of (LT) account for this difference? She might say that it resides not in what one is aware of but in *how* one is aware of it. In one case, one is experientially aware of something, in the other introspectively. After all, one can distinguish one's desire that *p* from one's hope that *p* perfectly fine without requiring that the subject-matter of the hope is distinct from the subject-matter of the desire. But this is not analogous: the objects of the desire and hope are by hypothesis the same. We do not start out with such an assumption in the experience/introspection case. Indeed, as we noted above, the direction of attention in the experience/introspection pair is not the same. To repeat, one is attending to things in the world, the other to one's own mind. *Prima facie* this would suggest that the experience and the introspective state have different objects.

Defenders of (LT) will reply that their point is that in attending to one's own mind in this case, i.e. to the character of one's experience, one attends to the world. They will say that I am simply missing this central point. But I am not: (LT*) can account for that point just as well. The crucial question is whether (LT) in turn can account for the fact that in introspection we are aware of our own mind in any sense at all. Since the subject-matter of introspective awareness is supposedly identical with what one is aware of in experience defenders of (LT) can appeal merely to the kind of mental activity we are engaged in when introspecting. And that does not seem to get it right. A mere change in *how* one is aware of something does not seem sufficient to account for the difference between being aware of the world and being aware of an aspect of one's mind. The difference seems to reside in the subject-matter of the awareness and not in our attitude to what is, in fact, the same subject-matter.

Stoljar (forthcoming) voices related sentiments. He thinks that the stronger claim – that there is no awareness of experience itself in introspection – runs into trouble. Suppose it is possible to have an episode of visual perception and one of visual imagination with identical subject-matter. Given the claim that in introspection one is not aware of experience at all, it would seem to follow that one cannot introspectively tell the two situations apart. Stoljar thinks that this is false – on his view we can distinguish the two cases in introspection. For instance, we are disposed to acquire the belief that things are as we perceive them but not that things are as we imagine them. This difference in inclination to believe can be explained in terms of the difference in functional role that the two kinds of episode occupy in our mental economy. And since, by hypothesis the two episodes have identical subject-matter, Stoljar says, one must be introspectively aware of experience itself. He also maintains that it is obvious – ‘a datum’ – that introspection yields some awareness of one’s experiences. Let us call this ‘Stoljar’s Datum’. While I am sympathetic to his overall point here, the way I have formulated the challenge to defenders of (LT) does not rely on the deliverance of introspection.

Stoljar argues that defenders of the ‘argument from diaphanousness’, as he calls it, ought not to hold that in introspection one is not aware of one’s experience at all, but rather that one is not *directly* aware of it. In other words, these philosophers should say that in introspection we have direct awareness of the subject-matter of experience, but only indirect awareness of the experiences themselves.³⁴ What is the distinction between direct and indirect awareness? Stoljar’s proposal assumes a classic account of this distinction, found among others in Jackson (1977, 19-20). First we define indirect awareness. A subject *S* is indirectly aware of some *x* if and only if *S* is aware of *x* in virtue of being aware of some *y*, where *x* and *y* are distinct. Direct awareness is then defined negatively. *S* is directly aware of *x* if and only if *S* is aware of *x* and *S* is not indirectly aware of *x*.

Can the distinction between direct and indirect awareness help to meet the challenge put to defenders of (LT)? Following Stoljar’s suggestion, they might say that we have to recognise two levels of awareness, direct and indirect. (LT) specifies only the former. So, proponents of this line would already make one concession: they would have to admit that (LT) is not the whole story. But at the same time, they would point out, (LT) itself is not shown to be mistaken. It does the job of specifying exhaustively what we are directly aware of in

³⁴ And he thinks that most proponents of the argument have in mind something along these lines. That is to say, they would endorse the claim that we have indirect awareness of experience in introspection.



introspection. Of course, we have to look to a further, indirect level of awareness to provide us with the materials to meet the challenge. We are introspectively aware of our own mind – of our own experience – only indirectly.

Tye 2000, for instance, might be interpreted to hold that introspection affords indirect awareness of one's experience *by* being directly aware of what experience is about.³⁵ One is not introspectively aware of what experience is like by being aware of properties of experience; rather such awareness is 'awareness-*that* – awareness that *an* experience with a certain phenomenal character is present.' (52) The latter arises automatically, he says, without the help of background belief and inferences. As noted in chapter 1, section (2), for Tye introspection is a reliable process involving the application of certain recognitional concepts (phenomenal concepts) to some input (direct awareness of objects and properties in the world) yielding as output a belief that one is undergoing a state with that subject-matter couched in phenomenal terms. He envisages this process to be similar to introspective awareness of one's own thoughts: here, the introspective process takes direct awareness of what one thinks as input and yields as output a belief that one is having a thought with such a subject-matter via the application of a recognitional concept. One is introspectively aware of the thought indirectly, but without the help of inference or reasoning. The introspective process is responsible for this non-inferential transmission of awareness. The difference between the two cases, thought and experience, resides in the concepts applied in introspection. One kind of concept – the concept of a thought that P in its first-person singular, present tense application – enables a belief that one is undergoing a thought with a certain subject-matter. Another kind of concept – a phenomenal concept – enables a belief that one is undergoing an experience with a certain phenomenal character. (Tye 2000, 26-9)

Does Tye's view meet the challenge of accommodating a sense of awareness of one's own experience? At first glance, the answer might appear 'yes'. For, Tye claims that one is indirectly aware in introspection that one is undergoing an experience with a certain phenomenal character thanks to an automatic process. The latter takes one from direct awareness of the subject-matter of experience to indirect awareness that one is having an experience with a

³⁵ 'When we introspect our experiences and feelings, we become aware of what it is like for us to undergo them. But we are not directly aware of those experiences and feelings; nor are we directly aware of any of their qualities. The qualities to which we have direct access are the external ones, the qualities that, if they are qualities of anything, are qualities of external things. By being aware of these qualities, we are aware of phenomenal character.' Tye 2000, 51.

certain character via the application of special phenomenal concepts. So, indirect awareness—that is provided by introspection because it is based on direct awareness of what experience is about together with automatic concept application in the introspective process.

But on closer inspection some questions arise. On the above proposal, defenders of (LT) hold that all that one is directly aware of in introspection is the subject-matter of experience. And they want to say that one is introspectively indirectly aware of one's experiences themselves. It seems to me that proponents of this view owe us some plausible account of the relation between these two types of awareness. Suggesting that God simply gives us indirect introspective awareness would not be satisfactory, for example. At any rate, if one's introspective awareness of experience is to be indirect, it has to arise in virtue of something else one is directly aware of. It would be natural to expect that one is indirectly aware of one's experience in virtue of being directly aware of one's experience's subject-matter. The proposal scarcely makes sense otherwise. For suppose there is no significant relation between the direct awareness characterised by (LT) and the indirect awareness that yields awareness of one's experience. The latter has to be based on something that we are directly aware of but that is not part of (LT). But then it is not true that the only things we are directly aware of in introspection is characterised by (LT). Consequently, those who want to respond to the challenge by making a distinction between direct and indirect awareness need to tell us how indirect introspective awareness is based on direct awareness of the subject-matter of experience.

What is this relation, on Tye's view? He does say that one becomes aware of experience by being directly aware of objects and properties in the world. He therefore intends the indirect awareness of one's experience to be based on direct awareness of what experience is about. But note that for Tye, indirect awareness of experience is the result of a reliable process in which the application of phenomenal concepts is triggered. There is no sense in which direct awareness of, say, property F itself affords or leads to further indirect awareness of the experience as of some F. Being directly aware of F does causally trigger (in introspection) the application of concepts that result in indirect awareness of the experience. But that is compatible with mere causing; no other link need exist between the two kinds of awareness. However, if there is no further link it is hard to see how the awareness of experience deserves to be called 'indirect'. We saw in the previous paragraph that indirect awareness of the

experience has to be based on direct awareness of what experience is of. It is precisely this account that Tye still owes us.

There is a further question. Recall the schematic definition of indirect awareness. A subject *S* is indirectly aware of some *x* if and only if *S* is aware of *x* in virtue of being aware of some *y*, where *x* and *y* are distinct. We then defined direct awareness negatively: *S* is directly aware of *x* if and only if *S* is aware of *x* and *S* is not indirectly aware of *x*. For the case at hand, we can fill in the schema a little more: a subject *S* is indirectly introspectively aware of her experience if and only if *S* is introspectively aware of her experience in virtue of being directly aware of what the experience is about. My question now is about the direct awareness in this schema. It is direct awareness of what experience is about, in virtue of which one becomes indirectly introspectively aware of the experience itself. I want to know what the mode of this direct awareness is. By ‘mode’ I mean whether it is direct introspective awareness, direct perceptual awareness or direct awareness in thought. (Perhaps there are other modes, but I do not think they would be relevant here.)

If *S* is indirectly introspectively aware of her experience, is this in virtue of being

- (a) directly perceptually aware of what her experience is about
- (b) directly aware in thought of what her experience is about, or
- (c) directly introspectively aware of what her experience is about?

Immediately, I think we can rule out (b). A non-introspective belief about what my experience is about is in principle available to me in the absence of having the experience, or even to someone other than me. Such a belief cannot provide the basis for introspective awareness of my experience since the latter at least requires that there is a relevant experience taking place at that time. That leaves (a) and (c).

Which one do defenders of (LT) have in mind? It often looks as if philosophers put forward option (a). Shoemaker, in the passage I have quoted in the beginning of this chapter, says that in introspecting an experience as of a blue summery sky or a red tomato ‘neither the blue nor the red is an object of *introspective* awareness; these are experienced perceptually rather than introspectively, as located outside one, in the sky or in the tomato, not as features of one’s experience.’ (Shoemaker 1996a, 100-101) So Shoemaker appears to hold that in introspection, one is perceptually aware of what experience is about. Tye, on the other hand, is not explicit. It is unclear which option he is endorsing. He says, e.g. ‘[v]ia introspection, you are directly aware

of a range of qualities that you experience as being qualities of surfaces at varying distances away...by attending to what you experience outside, as it were, you know what it is like inside.’ (Tye 2000, 47). Likewise, I think it is unclear which option Harman would prefer. He says ‘[L]ook at a tree and try to turn your attention to intrinsic features of your visual experience. I predict that you will find that the only features there to turn your attention to will be features of the tree.’ (Harman 1990, 667) Both Tye and Harman leave wide open as to whether what one is directly aware of in such a case is perceptual or introspective awareness.

So which is it? Suppose it is option (a), i.e. direct perceptual awareness of what experience is about. The claim would be that in introspection, S is indirectly introspectively aware of her experience in virtue of being directly perceptually aware of what her experience is about. Recall the two different views of introspecting phenomenal character I mentioned in chapter 1, section (1). It may be thought to be either an everyday sort of introspective awareness or a special sort of introspective awareness. Certainly, (a) would fit with the idea that introspective awareness of phenomenal character is an everyday introspective awareness. According to it, introspection of phenomenal character normally accompanies our conscious perceptual experience; indeed it is almost like a by-product of perception. We would still want to know, though, how direct perceptual awareness of what the experience is about gives rise to indirect introspective awareness of the experience. Simply to claim that it does is not much of an account yet, merely the promise of one.

This problem gets exacerbated if one prefers the idea that our introspective awareness of phenomenal character is a special sort of awareness. For now we have to say that sometimes perceptual awareness of what experience is about gives rise to indirect introspective awareness of experience itself, but usually it does not. It does so when the subject is introspecting. But what does it mean for the subject to introspect on this view? There is nothing she *does* to begin with, other than merely attending to what she is experiencing – so far this is equal to the normal non-introspective perceptual awareness. Compare this to a case of displaced perception. Suppose you have a cake in the oven and you want to check whether it is done. One way of doing this is to stick a toothpick in the cake. If the toothpick comes out clean, the cake is done. On such an occasion, some would hold that you see that the cake is done in virtue of seeing the clean toothpick. (Dretske 1995, 41-44). In the case of displaced perception, the subject activates and uses background beliefs which together with her perception give rise to indirect awareness of something via inference. But if such use of background beliefs or

inferring activity is supposed to play a role in the introspection case, we have not yet been told about it. So it is reasonable to ask just what provides the subject with introspective awareness of her experience. Perhaps it is an act of will or a decision she makes – ‘Now I will introspect’ – which then causes her direct awareness of what she is experiencing to give rise to indirect awareness of the experience. Again, we are missing crucial details. Without them, the suggestion that in introspection one is indirectly introspectively aware of one’s experience in virtue of being perceptually aware of what experience is about seems a bit magical.

Suppose, finally, that it is option (c): the idea is that one is indirectly introspectively aware of one’s experience in virtue of being directly introspectively aware of what experience is about. It may seem that this makes the question of how the former arises from the latter easier to answer. For, if my direct awareness is already in the introspective mode, it makes sense to think that any indirect awareness we have in virtue of it is also introspective awareness. But this would require that one could be introspectively directly aware of things that our experiences are typically about. If, for instance, our perceptual experiences are about ordinary objects in the world, then one would have to be able to be introspectively aware of tables and chairs. This seems almost a category mistake – it surely is very odd to say that one can directly introspect one’s external perceptual environment! Option (c), then, does not make much sense. So it appears that the previous option (a) is the only viable one. However, given the questions I raised about it earlier, this leaves us with the mere promise of an account of the relation between direct awareness of what experience is about and indirect awareness of experience itself.

An entirely different way to respond on behalf of (LT) would be to embrace the idea that there is no significant difference between one’s awareness of what experience is about and what experience is like. At first glance, it seems that Dretske (1995) who holds a view of introspection and introspective awareness of phenomenal character in some ways similar to Tye’s, does so. Dretske maintains that the introspective process provides one with information about one’s mind by representing states of affairs in the world. In introspecting what experience is like one is aware of what such experience represents.³⁶ He, however, is explicit about a certain consequence of his view.

³⁶ ‘The Representational Thesis identifies the qualities of experience – qualia – with the properties objects are represented, as having.’ (65)

What we know by introspection is not that we have a mind, but what is 'in' the mind – i.e., the way things are being represented. ... If we know not only what we experience and think (i.e., what exists 'in' the mind), but that we experience and think it (that there is a mind it exists in), we do not know this by introspection. (57)

Thus, given that one is introspectively aware only of what experience is about, introspection *alone* cannot supply any further awareness that one is in a certain kind of state. Introspection turns out not to be the source of some important awareness or knowledge about the mind after all, i.e. of one's awareness that one is undergoing an experience or that one is having a thought. Put the other way around, if there is awareness of one's experiences as experiences, this turns out not to be introspective awareness. This plainly conflicts with 'Stoljar's Datum', namely that *introspection* furnishes us with some (indirect) awareness of one's experiences.

But Dretske would simply reject Stoljar's Datum. Having pointed out that his view of introspection and phenomenal character has this consequence, he professes great satisfaction at this fact:

What the Representational Thesis provides, then, is what it should provide. And no more. It reveals the source of first-person authority about the contents of the mind, about what it is we think and experience. It tells us how we know it is F we experience. It does not tell us how (or whether) we know we experience F, how (or whether) we know that we stand in those relations to F that make F part of the mind (i.e., a mental content). It shouldn't. That is the business of epistemology. (57-8)

Given my overall views, I do not want to defend Stoljar's Datum; after all, it is a claim about the deliverance of introspection about what experience is like. However, the way I formulated the worry in the beginning does not rely on any specific proposal about what introspection reveals. I argued that there must a difference between the case of ordinary experiential awareness and introspective awareness of what such experience is like. So, rejecting Stoljar's Datum does not help to answer my challenge. Does Dretske reject my challenge as well? In fact, I am not sure. But it seems to me that even Dretske thinks that introspection provides us with *some* information, over and above that of information provided by merely having a particular experience. Presumably, since this information is introspectively acquired, it concerns our own minds in some sense or other. But what it is, given Dretske's denial that we are aware of experience itself in such a case, I cannot fathom. He says that we can know introspectively 'only what we experience and think' yet we cannot know 'that we experience and think it'. This appears to me either to disavow that introspection tells us anything over and above what experience tells us or to involve a straightforward contradiction.

My two worries are not conclusive arguments against (LT). But they do make a reasonable case for (LT*) rather than (LT). So, if one is persuaded by the claim that first-person reflection on what experience is like reveals what experience is about, one should not make this an exclusive and exhaustive claim about phenomenal character. And if this is correct, then it will not be a claim about visual phenomenology that is of much use in the Standard Method.

(6) Weaker Intentionalism

In a recent paper, Alex Byrne has advocated an Intentionalist view of experience (Byrne 2001). Byrne's view is of interest to the topic of this chapter. As I will show, his argument for Intentionalism rests essentially on a version of (LT), the looking-through claim. I have argued that (LT) does not entail a particular view of the subject-matter of experience. But Byrne would not be out of sympathy with this claim; Intentionalism, as he defends it, is a very weak view. It is in principle compatible with the view that we are aware of 'mental paint' as well as with Sense Datum Theory. In short, Byrne holds that Intentionalism is compatible with any view of experiential subject-matter. The difference between Byrne and me is therefore that he holds that (LT) nonetheless establishes a weak form of Intentionalism, while I hold that (LT) does no such thing since it can be accommodated by any of the major views of the metaphysics of experience.

Let me first set out his view and show how his argument rests on a version of (LT). Byrne wishes to defend Intentionalism about visual experience, i.e. the view that the intentional content of experience determines its phenomenal character. Put differently, if there is any change in phenomenal character there is also a change in intentional content (Cf. also Tye 2000, 45). The formulation of the thesis in terms of determination is deliberate; Byrne does not want to claim anything stronger than supervenience and he does not think that claims about reduction or individuation follow from the simple supervenience claim.

Byrne takes for granted the idea that experience has intentional or propositional content. He maintains that the basic claim that experience has such content is uncontroversial:

[t]he notion that a subject's *perceptual experience* represents the world to be a certain way – the way the world *perceptually seems* to the subject – should be no more controversial than the notion that a subject's *belief state* represents the world to be a certain way – the way the subject *takes* the world to be. (201)

According to Byrne, the notion of intentional content he employs is a very thin notion; such content is an abstract object that has veridicality conditions and ‘is the object of some propositional attitude-like psychological state’ (201fn5). On this thin understanding, propositional content is not necessarily expressible in a that-clause. He also concedes that there are some difficult questions about the exact details of such content on an occasion. But, he says, this does not matter greatly since Intentionalism is in certain respects a very weak thesis: ‘It is neutral on the question of what our perceptual experiences are about.’(204)

Given this last qualification, when Byrne takes for granted that experience represents *the world* to be a certain way, he must use the term in some very wide sense so as to accommodate ‘any view about the content and objects of perception’. The uncontroversial assumption he has in mind must be the basic idea that experience has aboutness or subject-matter. But then Byrne moves from this innocuous idea of aboutness straight to the notion of intentional or representational content. ‘When one sees a cat, one’s experience is ‘about’ the cat: this is the representational or intentional component of the experience.’(199). This move is controversial. While it may be true that one can account for the nature of visual experience in terms of intentional content no matter how the subject-matter is characterised, this needs to be shown by argument. If experience has intentional content – i.e. if it is individuated in terms of intentional properties – this does not simply fall out of the observation that experience has subject-matter. Byrne slides between the broader and the more restricted ways of using the term ‘content’ I set out in chapter 1. I will come back to this point later.

Byrne’s argument consists of two premises from which Intentionalism is supposed to follow. The first premise is that if there is a sudden change in phenomenal character, a suitably idealised subject of experience will notice it. To such subjects, in other words, ‘changes in phenomenal character are self-intimating.’ The second premise is that if the subject detects a change in phenomenal character of two experiences, then these experiences differ in content. From this he draws the desired conclusion: ‘if a (suitably idealized) subject’s consecutive experiences are the same in content, then they are the same in phenomenal character.’ (213)³⁷

³⁷ Byrne then goes on to show that the various restrictions, such as idealisation of subject, consecutive order of experiences and intra-subject scope can be relaxed. Without these restrictions the conclusion of the argument is ‘for any two possible experiences e and e^* , if they differ in phenomenal character, then they differ in content.’ (217)

Let us grant the first premise for the purposes of this discussion. I now want to look at the second premise. It is the heart of the argument. Here it is stated in full:

Assume that a subject enjoys an experience e that ends at t and then experience e^* , and that after t the subject notices a change in phenomenal character, solely on the basis of her current experience e^* and the (perfect memory produced by her past experience e). Then the way things seem to the subject when she enjoys e differs from the way things seem when she enjoys e^* . That is, the content of e differs from the content of e^* . (210)

How does Byrne argue for it? To recognise the truth of this premise, he holds one has to look at how a subject discovers the phenomenal character of a given experience. Say a subject has an experience as of a green ball. Then, in order to discover the phenomenal character of this experience she has to look at the ball and ascertain its apparent colour. And, Byrne maintains this is all there is to it: 'Nothing else will do the job, and nothing more is needed.' (210) In support of this view he mentions 'Evans' insight', namely that one gets knowledge of one's own experiential state by re-using the very same conceptual skills that one uses to make judgements about the world in having the experience (Evans 1982, 227-8). The idea is that in order to discover the phenomenal character of one's experience, one has to do the same things one would do if one were attempting to determine the features of the objects one perceives. Byrne gives us an example:

We induce in our subject a red afterimage experience; how does she discover its phenomenal character? ... [S]he determines the apparent quality of the (intentional) object of her experience – the afterimage. The subject attends to the world as it appears to her.... Admittedly, any particular specification of the content of her afterimage experience will court controversy. ... However, this does not affect the point that the subject can only discover the phenomenal character of her experience by attending to the world (whether external or internal) as her experience represents it. (211)

Byrne insists that the *sole basis* for noticing changes in phenomenal character is attention to how the world appears. 'Any *other* information [the subject] might extract from her experiences, if it is not information about the way the world appeared or appears, is not relevant.' (211) This is just the claim that in attending to what experience is like one merely attends to what experience is about – that in introspection we look through experience only to what it is about. In other words, Byrne holds (LT).³⁸ This central second premise in Byrne's case for Intentionalism is not itself argued for. Apart from a gesture towards Evans, this claim about our introspective awareness of phenomenal character is stated rather than established.

³⁸ I should say 'something like (LT)' because Byrne does not restrict his view to vision.

Byrne clearly assumes that it is at bottom not very contentious. I suggest this is because he takes it to be grounded in an introspectively obvious fact about the phenomenology of our experiences.

Byrne's footnote 22 might seem to conflict with my suggestion. There he says that 'the argument for intentionalism given [in his paper] does not rely on transparency'. However, he construes the transparency claim as the denial that we are introspectively aware of any properties of experience. Since he holds that Intentionalism is compatible with postulating awareness of mental paint properties or sense data, he is not interested in making such a strong claim. I will comment on this generous aspect of his view in a moment. Concerning the present issue, note that (LT) is not the transparency claim as Byrne construes it. (LT) is the claim that in introspection of what experience is like one is aware merely of what experience is about. Hence (LT) is compatible with very different views of the subject-matter of experience, including one that posits mental paint properties.

We can now understand the agreement between Byrne and me. Byrne holds that positive claims about the subject-matter of experience are independent of a defence of Intentionalism. I argued that (LT) does not bias any view of experiential subject-matter. As I have just said, Byrne's argument for Intentionalism relies essentially on an appeal to phenomenology, namely that in attending to what experience is like one merely attends to what experience is about. But in order for Intentionalism to be all-inclusive in the sense Byrne intends, this appeal to phenomenology cannot prejudice any view of the subject-matter of experience, either. Hence, Byrne and I are in agreement about this liberal aspect of (LT).

The point at which Byrne and I part company is where he would insist that although (LT) is neutral between different views of the subject-matter of experience, it is still sufficient to establish Intentionalism. This I do not agree with. I want to make several points. The first relates to the Intentionalist thesis itself. As we noted, Byrne's formulation in terms of supervenience is deliberate; he does not want to claim anything stronger than this. However, this makes for a very weak thesis indeed. For, mere supervenience is simply a strong modal correlation. It leaves open the possibility of a perfect correlation between intentional properties of the content of experience and, for instance, mental paint properties constituting phenomenal character. In what sense, one might therefore ask, has Byrne *established* Intentionalism? All it seems he has done is not ruled it out.

However, a defender of Byrne could respond in the following way to this criticism. She might concede that the Intentionalist thesis does not provide an argument refuting the existence of mental paint properties of experience and their role in accounting for phenomenal character. But, she would insist there is no positive need for postulating them either. An account of phenomenal character only in terms of representational properties satisfies the Intentionalist thesis. As such it is a metaphysically more economical account because it involves only one kind of property (intentional properties) rather than at least two (intentional and mental paint properties). On grounds of simplicity, then, we ought to prefer Intentionalism (Cf. also Tye 2000). I suppose that unless it could be shown that there is some requirement for mental paint properties of experience after all or that the claim of economy is misleading in some way this is not a bad defence. But, then again, it does depend on one's general metaphysical commitments. This kind of defence will strike materialists very potent. Committed dualists, on the other hand, are not going to be persuaded by it. And even those who look to the case of phenomenal consciousness to decide the issue without prior preference, are also not going to find the Intentionalist's claim of simplicity intuitively obvious.

The next point I want to make concerns Byrne's move from the observation that experience essentially has aboutness to the idea that experience has intentional content. As I pointed out earlier, this is a non-trivial move to make and it is most likely based on an equivocation between the innocuous idea that experience has subject-matter and the claim that experience has intentional content. But from Byrne's perspective the move probably seems rather unassuming. Byrne is plugging into a certain established conception of the debate about the nature of experience. It involves the default assumption that experience has intentional content. The main question argued over by rival camps is whether an account of experience requires us to postulate any properties *besides* such content.³⁹ The debate is therefore thought to take place between Intentionalists and defenders of the Mental Paint View. Sense Datum Theory hardly gets a look in, while the non-common factor view Disjunctivism/Naïve Realism is usually entirely ignored. Such prejudice, of course, does not exactly provide a good reason for accepting the move in question. At the very least, then, Byrne's case for Intentionalism is incomplete on this score.

³⁹ Cf. Byrne's characterisation of the debate in the beginning of his paper. See also the references he cites for each side of the debate.

Finally, Byrne's argument crucially rests on the assumption of (LT). Byrne presents the matter with an air of self-evidence and beyond serious challenge. As I have tried to show, in the previous section, things are far from straightforward and closer investigation quickly leads to serious questions about the legitimacy of (LT). I will not repeat these doubts here. But if I am right, then it seems all that Byrne is entitled to is (LT*). But the latter would not allow him to draw the conclusion he desires.

Let me finish the discussion of Byrne's paper with a remark about his treatment of Sense Datum theory. In the second half of the paper, Byrne attempts to answer an array of standard objections to Intentionalism. An important part of this defence consists in his showing that the core idea of Intentionalism makes almost no demands on how to specify the intentional content of experience. For instance, in the case of mental paint properties an Intentionalist could simply say that such properties are part of what is represented in experience. The truth-evaluable content of experience is partly self-reflexive. Byrne acknowledges that somebody might reject his account of mental paint properties. His point is that the mere postulation of such properties does not force one to abandon Intentionalism.

Similarly for sense data. But here Byrne claims moreover that on closer inspection it turns out that the defender of Sense Datum Theory must 'go representational' in any case. He points out that Sense Datum Theory is driven by the argument from illusion. The idea is to explain sameness in phenomenal character of a pair of matching veridical perception and hallucination or illusion by reference to the subject's acquaintance with a special sensory object that these experiences have in common. However, Byrne argues, mere thing-awareness has the problem that one can be aware of some F without being aware of it as F. One therefore has to specify, concerning a particular red sense datum, that one is aware of it *that it is red*. Thus in order to specify phenomenal character, one needs to introduce representational content. (226)

It is one thing to say that acquaintance with a special sensory object is not sufficient to account for phenomenal character. But it is another thing to say that acquaintance is irrelevant.⁴⁰ Now,

⁴⁰ Although I do not find Byrne's argument convincing even on the first point that acquaintance with special sensory objects is not sufficient to account for phenomenal character. Byrne says that awareness of a red sense datum should be understood not to imply awareness of the sense datum *as red*. (226) But why should the defender of Sense Datum Theory concede this? Byrne's argument is that such 'would be the natural way of taking it' since the principle mentioned above – one can be aware of some F without being aware of it as F – is part of 'ordinary parlance'. But a proponent of Sense Datum Theory could simply stipulate that the relation of acquaintance between a subject and a special sensory object is such that there is an implication from being aware

Byrne is right to hold that the Sense Datum view is a response to the argument from illusion. Acquaintance with special sensory objects serves to provide for a common factor between indistinguishable veridical perceptions, hallucinations and illusions. But then, Intentionalism, too, is a response to the argument from illusion; intentional content serves as a common factor between different kinds of experience that are indistinguishable to the subject.⁴¹ So why should one opt for acquaintance with sensory objects rather than for intentional content? An answer to this reveals a further motivation that fuels the Sense Datum view. This is the perceived need to account for a particular feature of phenomenal character. Sense Datum theorists hold that a crucial feature of what experience is like is that in experience one is presented with objects and their features is as if they *actually exist* (See e.g. Price 1932, 63; Robinson 1994, 32. Also Sturgeon 2000, 34). It is an account of this feature that is thought to require *acquaintance* with objects rather than, say, representation. Byrne's claim that defenders of Sense Datum Theory have to 'go representational' ignores this crucial motivation of the former.⁴²

of a red' datum to being aware of a datum as red'. After all, this acquaintance relation is very special and highly theoretical. Perhaps it is thus not unreasonable to regard common speech to be irrelevant to it.

⁴¹ For the various motivational forces of all the rival views on the nature of experience, see Martin's exposition and analysis of the structure of the debate in the philosophy of perception. Martin 1998, manuscript.

⁴² I will investigate this phenomenological claim made, amongst others, by proponents of the Sense Datum Theory in chapter 4. There I will argue that Intentionalism can accommodate the claim, given a certain interpretation of it.

Chapter 3

Transparency Part II: Mind-independence

(1) Introduction

In this chapter I am again concerned with a particular claim about visual phenomenology. I focus on the second of the two claims that are part of the appeal to transparency which I set out in section (3) of the last chapter. I have called it the ‘Mind-independence claim’ (MI). Many philosophers today accept it as bedrock introspective evidence. They take for granted that in visual experience ‘the world is just presented to one’. The assumption is that simple reflection on visual experience reveal it to be so; it allegedly exposes that one’s experience is as of ordinary mind-independent objects and their properties. Thus, mind-independence is taken to be part of phenomenal character of visual experience.

(MI) Introspection of what visual experience is like reveals that it looks as if mind-independent objects and their properties are before one.

I think (MI) is false. Reflection on visual phenomenology does not bear out any phenomenological awareness of apparent ontological status.

The discussion in this chapter is structured as follows. In the next section, I consider in what sense mind-independence might be thought to be present in visual phenomenology. I argue that the literature contains a proposal to the effect that apparent mind-independence is part of what experience is like in virtue of its spatial character. The chief part of this chapter is spent discussing this proposal and hence this line of support for (MI). In section (3), I pursue the idea of a general relation between two phenomenological features, such that one is introspectively aware of the second in virtue of being aware of the first. I express doubt that such a general relation can be found which would be suitable to support the particular proposal concerning spatial character and apparent mind-independence. In section (4), I then turn my attention to the specific notion of spatial character that might plausibly figure in this proposal. Focus tends to be on the three-dimensionality of such character. I question that 3D spatial character significantly advances the case for apparent mind-independence. In section (5), I set out and discuss a particular case for a conceptual connection between space and mind-independence associated with Strawson (1959, 1966) and Evans (1985). I argue that this conceptual connection, if plausible at all, cannot be used to buttress the proposal about spatial

character and apparent mind-independence. This concludes my specific case against (MI). In the last section, however, I present and reject an argument put forward by Boghossian and Velleman (1997a) to the effect that the spatial character of experiences of after-images gives rise to the appearance of these entities as mind-dependent. I add this discussion of apparent mind-dependence in order to make clear that I object to (MI) not because I hold instead that it looks as if one is presented with mind-dependent objects and their properties. I object to (MI) because I reject the idea of any sort of visually apparent mode of existence or ontological status.

(2) Mind-independence

There are diverse conceptions of mind-independence available, differing in strength. The strongest one, articulated in Williams (1978), conceives of reality completely independently of any human cognition. This mind-independent reality is ‘a reality which exists independently of ... knowledge, and indeed ... independently of any thought or experience.’ (64) Williams calls it the conception of ‘what is there anyway’, the ‘absolute conception of reality’. Kant’s conception of the noumena (things in themselves) is also an articulation of the absolute conception of reality. Kant holds that we cannot know the world of noumena and Williams, too, gives reason to doubt whether we could ever know reality absolutely conceived. Any knowing requires representing what is known and hence conceptualising what is known from a human point of view. In the face of Kant’s and Williams’ doubts about the knowability of an absolute conception of reality, it would seem odd to expect such a notion of mind-independence to be present in the phenomenology. It is likely that defenders of (MI) would be content with something less strong. A weaker conception of mind-independence can be found in Campbell (1997). Mind-independence, on this conception, requires merely existence unperceived. It therefore allows for some dependence on human cognition. For instance, dispositional properties that make ineliminable reference to human experience, may nonetheless be considered mind-independent, as long as something can have it in the absence of being perceived.⁴³ Whether it is this, or some other relevantly similar conception of mind-independence that defenders of (MI) are thinking of does not matter much to this discussion.

⁴³ This conception is also found in Strawson (1959) and Evans (1985), see section (5) of this chapter. It would not surprise me if it was based on Kant’s conception of the objective empirical world, i.e. the world of phenomena, or the things as they are for us (but, of course, without any idealist trappings).

In which way might one hold that a certain feature *F* is present in, or part of, what experience is like? By this I do not mean to ask about the metaphysics of phenomenal features. I mean to ask about the general manner or fashion in which a phenomenal feature might be present when one is introspectively aware of it. There are two main options. One way would be to suggest that the presence of phenomenal feature *F* should be thought of as a simple or monadic presence. The idea is that one may be introspectively aware of *F* by being presented with an instance of it, without this requiring one to be aware of any other phenomenal feature. Two kinds of requiring need to be distinguished here, namely the co-instantiating kind and the generative kind. Introspective awareness of *F* may require introspective awareness of another phenomenal feature *G* because *F* is never present in phenomenal character without the *G* also being present. Whether as a contingent matter of fact or by necessity, *G* may always accompany *F* in introspection of what experience is like. So, whenever one is introspectively aware of *F*-ness one is also introspectively aware of *G*-ness. For example, one might think that introspective awareness of a shape feature, say roundness, is always accompanied by introspective awareness of some colour or other.⁴⁴ This kind of requiring – the accompanying kind – is compatible with a feature being present in the monadic way. While in this case introspective awareness of *F* comes with introspective awareness of *G*, the former does not bring about the latter. Introspective awareness of *F*, if *F* is present in phenomenal character in a monadic way, is independent of introspective awareness of any other phenomenal feature. Let us say that *F* is *bluntly* part of phenomenal character if one is introspectively aware of it in a monadic way.

The second kind of requiring captures the sense in which introspective awareness of *F* may be brought about by introspective awareness of *G*. In this case, introspective awareness of *G* is required for that of *F* because the former *generates* the latter. If introspective awareness of a given phenomenal feature *F* requires – in the generative sense – introspective awareness of another one, then one is not introspectively aware of it in a monadic way. Rather, in this case the presence of some *F* is a little more complex than being bluntly part of what experience is like. Introspective awareness of such an *F* requires introspective awareness of some other phenomenal feature or features to bring it about. In such a case, *F* is part of visual phenomenology *by*, or *in virtue of*, some other feature characterising such phenomenology. One

⁴⁴ Conversely, though, it seems that redness (or any other colour) does not require any introspective awareness of shape. Suppose you are having an experience as of a red expanse and nothing else. Introspecting what such an experience is like would reveal just this: redness.

might perhaps usefully think of features that are present in such a way as derivative phenomenal features, whereas the bluntly present ones are underived phenomenal features.

The first option – blunt presence – is plainly implausible for the feature of mind-independence. Whatever it is that one holds one is introspectively aware of when reflecting on one's experience, I think all would agree that there is no presence of mind-independence in the blunt or monadic way just adumbrated. Appearing mind-independent is not on a par with appearing red or round. One could not introspectively point to (i.e. fix on) an instance of mind-independence as one can to an instance of roundness or redness. Compare this with what one ordinarily can be said to see. Suppose a normally sighted person is looking at a red ball and we ask her to tell us another property, besides roundness, that she sees the ball to have. She might say something like this: 'I see that the ball is red' or 'I see that the ball is shiny', etc. However, we would not expect her to say 'I see that the ball is mind-independent.' It would strike one as odd to list mind-independence as one of the properties like roundness. Equally, I want to say that it would be odd to claim that introspection of what experience is like reveals mind-independence in the same way that it reveals redness. Note that at this stage I am not arguing that mind-independence is not a feature of the phenomenology (or a visible property) at all. I am merely pointing out that if mind-independence is part of visual phenomenology it is not bluntly so.

This fits with a line of thought which I want to suggest is implicitly endorsed by proponents of (MI). It represents the second option. Consider these quotations from Tye, Shoemaker and Lycan:

Try to focus your attention on some intrinsic feature of the experience that distinguishes it from other experiences, something other than what it is an experience is of. The task seems impossible: one's awareness seems always to slip through the experience to the redness and shininess, *as instantiated together externally*. In turning one's mind inward to attend to the experience, one seems to end up scrutinizing *external* features or properties. (Tye 1995, 136, his italics.)

The [projectivist] view reconciles the phenomenology of these cases – the fact that the non-intentional properties we are aware of in them are *experienced as spatially located* – with the claim that sensory experience involves qualia or awareness of qualia. (Shoemaker, 1996a, 102, my italics.)

[S]hapes etc. are (represented as being) objects *external to oneself*, not as mere contents of one's consciousness. When one looks into the peep-box, one sees shapes arranged in a complex design, but one sees them as residing inside the box, on the other side of the peep-hole, not in one's head. They are *external* things. (Lycan 1995, 95, my italics.)

What these philosophers clearly mean to suggest is that introspective reflection reveals that experience is as of the subject's perceptual environment, namely the mind-independent world and its ordinary objects and properties. But they do so by using *spatial* terminology in describing phenomenal character. Tye speaks of one's awareness of things as instantiated externally, Shoemaker speaks of things as spatially located (or as 'located outside one' (Shoemaker 1996a, 101)) and Lycan holds that one is aware of shapes as objects external to oneself, residing not in one's head but in something worldly like a box. Why do they do this?

Note first that there is an ambiguity inherent in some of the spatial terms involved in the relevant descriptions. Consider 'external', 'instantiated externally' and 'located outside one'. These are ambiguous between meaning something concerning space or spatiality and meaning objective, non-mental or mind-independent.⁴⁵ The term 'external' is usually contrasted with 'internal'. This contrast can have a straightforward spatial sense. Something may be described as external or internal depending on whether or not it is within the confines of a certain region of space. For instance, boarding schools often have external pupils, i.e. those that live outside the premises of the school. But 'external' and 'internal' may also be used to contrast mind-dependence or mentality and mind-independence or non-mentality. When we talk about the world as it is independent of us we often say 'the external world'. Lycan, above, opposes the idea of objects as external to oneself with objects as 'mere contents of one's consciousness'. One finds further, somewhat related but more technical uses of the external/internal pair in debates in epistemology and philosophy of mind. These technical uses do not concern me here. I want to focus on the ambiguity between the spatial sense and the mind-independent sense of 'external' (and, correspondingly, of course, on the relevant senses of 'internal'). This ambiguity is also exhibited, but perhaps not to the same degree, by terms such as 'outside (one)' or 'outer', usually contrasted with 'inside (one)' or 'inner'.

An ambiguity may invite equivocation between its meanings. But, obviously, if ambiguity is all there is to it, we should resist equivocation, just like we would not equivocate between the three meanings of the term 'bank'. Nonetheless, the ambiguity may be responsible for a slip between the two senses of 'externality' or 'outer'. Starting off with the observation that introspective awareness of phenomenal character involves awareness as of spatially located or

⁴⁵ See, e.g. Bennett 1971, 314 for such a distinction. Peacocke 1983, comments on 'a dangerous ambiguity in the term 'depth'' (p.14). See section (4) below for more on Peacocke's distinction.

(spatially-)external entities, the step to awareness as of (non-mental-)external or mind-independent entities may seem unproblematic because ‘external’ is used first in one sense, then in the other sense. But it would be frivolous to accuse philosophers such as Lycan, Shoemaker and Tye of making such an egregious mistake – surely more than the mere fact of ambiguity underlies their slippery use. I suggest double use of the term merely facilitates a way of speaking that is in their eyes reflective of a tight connection between experience having a certain spatial character and experience being as of mind-independent objects.

Belief in an appropriate connection would explain the appeal to spatial characteristics we noticed in the quotations above. The starting point is that introspection reveals that experience presents entities as having a certain spatial character. The thought then turns on the idea that there is an intimate link between one’s visual awareness of entities as spatial and one’s visual awareness of them as mind-independent. Thus, some entities are supposedly presented to one in experience as mind-independent *as a result of* experience presenting them as spatial. The idea is that the spatial way of looking somehow fixes, determines, or brings about another way of looking, i.e. the mind-independent way of looking. I will use the phrase ‘phenomenological entailment’ or ‘p-entailment’ for this kind of necessitation relation between two phenomenal features. Call the thought concerning spatial character and mind-independence (S):

- (S) The spatial character of a visual experience p-entails the appearance of what is presented to one as mind-independent.

Most will immediately wonder about the notion of p-entailment used in (S). In the next section I begin to investigate this notion of a necessitation relation on a phenomenological level by considering whether there might be a general idea of phenomenological entailment that underlies (S).

(3) The idea of a general phenomenological entailment

The notion of phenomenological entailment at work in (S) might be elucidated in terms of a general model concerning visual phenomenology. How can phenomenal features be present in introspective awareness of phenomenal character? On the model I have in mind an answer is two-fold.

- (1) A phenomenal feature F is present in introspective awareness of phenomenal character if one is bluntly aware of F when reflecting on one’s visual experience.

- (2) A feature G is present in introspective awareness of phenomenal character if one is bluntly aware of F when reflecting on one's experience and F p-entails G. (If it looks F to S and F p-entails G then it looks G to S)

Call the conjunction (1) and (2) the 'entailment model of visual phenomenology', 'entailment model' for short. In chapter 1, I pointed out that there is a distinction between experiencing some F and experiencing something as F. This is the distinction between how things actually are and how they visually seem to one. The entailment model respects this distinction. But it says that if, when introspectively reflecting on experience, it visually seems as if there is something causal, and if being causal p-entails say, being physical, then it will also visually seem as if there is something physical. So if one grants that there is some relevant entailment between F and G, one has to grant that it visually appearing as if F p-entails it visually appearing as if G. In other words, the entailment model says that there can be entailment on a phenomenological level.

So what is the relation at the centre of the entailment model – what is p-entailment? This relation has to be such that it guarantees the move from the presence of one feature to the presence of another feature in introspection. There has to be some way of making sense of the idea that one is aware of phenomenal feature G *by*, or *as a result of* being aware of phenomenal feature F. There are two demands on p-entailment. It has to be some sort of a necessitating connection between F and G, the idea being that the presence of F somehow provides for, or has the effect that, feature G is present. But importantly – and this is the second demand – this relation has to work on the phenomenological level: the move from one feature to the other has to be plausible within one's awareness of *phenomenology*. In other words, the necessitation relation has to have phenomenological significance.

In the remainder of this section I consider some general kinds of relation that might be thought to be good candidates for supporting phenomenological entailment. Let us see whether entailments based on them could have phenomenological significance in the appropriate way to make the entailment model work.

One kind of relation reflects a *complete definitional identity* of the concepts in question. This may be identity of mode of presentation or only of reference. If it is identity of mode of presentation, one is a mere notational variant on the other. For example, 'triangle' is a notational variant on 'three-angled figure'. Clearly, if there is a triangle before one, then there is

a three-angled figure before one. It seems also obvious that this relation has phenomenological significance: if it looks as if there is a triangle before one, then it looks as if there is a three-angled figure before one. But this is trivially so. Looking triangular is simply the same as looking three-angled.

If it is identity of reference, we still get an entailment of this sort: provided that G and F co-refer, if G then F. Does this entailment hold on the phenomenological level? Some think so, for certain cases. Tye (2000), for instance, maintains that as long as two concepts F and G co-refer to a visible property, if something looks F to one then it looks G to one. He says that “if red is a disposition [to reflect such-and-such percentages of the light], then, I maintain, the spot, in looking red, does look disposed to reflect such-and-such percentages of the light.” (55) On such a view it is claimed that looking red is the same as looking disposed to reflect such-and-such percentages of the light. This is neither a trivial claim, nor is it obvious. It is hard to see how it could be the outcome of simple introspective reflection on experience, but appears, rather, to be the result of other philosophical commitments, such as a non-conceptual view of content, physicalism and some knowledge of colour science. To say that a red ball looks disposed to reflect such-and-such percentages of light to an eight-year old seems to amount to hard-nosed legislation concerning phenomenal similarity and difference. At the very least, there is plenty of room for dispute.

Another kind of relation is *partial definitional identity*. For example, ‘a square is something cornered.’ The properties square and cornered are not identical but they are more intimately connected than mere co-instantiation. Corners are essential constituent parts of squares. It is conceptually necessary that if something is square, then it is cornered. Does this relation hold on the phenomenological level? Is it true that if it looks as if there is something square before one, then it looks as if there is something cornered before one? Suppose someone has placed a dark flat square object on a white background. On top of the square, she has placed a differently coloured ring, which is wide enough to cover each of the four corners of the square underneath. Due to a phenomenon called ‘amodal completion’, in this case it still looks as if there is a square before one. Does one now have reason to think that it visually appears to one as if there is something cornered? I am not certain. To be sure, amodal completion allows for it to look as if there is a square before one. Perhaps amodal completion provides the visual system with a way to be aware of squares precisely *without* awareness of corners. Reflection on

one's phenomenology in such a case does not settle the matter either way. Hence, in this case, too, the phenomenal significance of the relation is unclear.

Finally, consider the *determinate-determinable* relation. For instance, yellow and coloured. What about any phenomenological significance? That is, is it true that if something looks yellow, then it looks coloured? Again, I am not sure. The role of the concept Coloured is to be a determinable of individual colours. Being coloured is a property that can only be had by something in virtue of having a particular colour property. Yet there needs to be more than a single colour to hold on to a distinction between, say yellow and coloured. If one could experience only yellow and had no knowledge or experience of other colour properties, the distinction between determinate and determinable would collapse. This shows that the determinable concept Colour is part of a hierarchy of concepts, serving to categorise lower level concepts, such as Yellow, Green and Blue and govern their application within the system. The conceptual relation between our concepts Yellow and Coloured has to be understood in terms of this hierarchy. There is no reason to expect it to be part of visual phenomenology. Reflection on the case is not particularly helpful. When I introspect my experience as of something yellow, it is not clear that what it is visually like involves something's being coloured. Of course, it might seem to me as if there are coloured objects before me. But this could be plausible because there are two facts working together: it visually seems to me as if something yellow is before me, and it is a conceptual truth that yellow things are coloured.⁴⁶

In sum, the phenomenological significance of all these candidate relations turns out to be either a trivial or a contentious matter. They would make the entailment model of visual phenomenology either trivial or highly controversial. But if the proposed p-entailment is highly contentious, it is difficult to regard whatever is p-entailed to be obviously present to one in introspecting what experience is like. It seems we cannot take the idea of a general p-entailment for granted, unless it is a trivial one. However, if there is a phenomenological entailment between spatial character and mind-independence, it is not a trivial entailment. The two terms, 'spatial' and 'mind-independent' are not are not synonymous. Hence, in the absence of an appropriate general relation of phenomenological entailment that might underlie (S), we have to look at the details particular to (S). Perhaps (S) is a special case; spatial character might phenomenologically entail mind-independence without generalising to other cases.

⁴⁶ See chapter 5 for more on this.

It does not seem unreasonable, for instance, to suppose that the relation between spatial character and mind-independent character may be spelled out in terms of a special conceptual connection between the concepts of space and mind-independence. I will discuss this idea in section (5). Another suggestion is to hold that the notion of spatial character itself holds the key to understanding how it p-entails the appearance of mind-independence. I consider this suggestion in the next section, focussing on the particular notion of spatial character that might most plausibly feature in (S).

(4) The notion of spatial character

Among the claims about what kind of spatial character our visual experience has, the contrast between a 2-D and a 3-D spatial awareness has frequently figured. The forerunners of Sense Data Theory, such as Locke, Hume and Berkeley, thought that conscious visual awareness is best characterised in terms of a 2-D visual array.

When we set before our eyes a round globe of any uniform colour, ... it is certain that the idea thereby imprinted in our mind is of a flat circle variously shadowed, with several degrees of light and brightness coming to our eyes. ...[The] idea we receive from thence is only a plane variously coloured, as is evident from painting. (Locke 1975, Book II, ch. ix, sec. 8.)

'Tis commonly allowed by philosophers that all bodies which discover themselves to the eye, appear as if painted on a plain surface, and that their different degrees of remoteness from ourselves are discover'd more by reason than by the senses... (Hume 1978, 56)

Suppose, for example, that looking at the moon I should say that it were fifty or sixty semidiameters of the earth distant from me. Let us see what moon this is spoken of: it is plain it cannot be the visible moon, or anything like the visible moon, or that which I see, which is only a round, luminous plane of about thirty visible points in diameter. (Berkeley 1975, sec.44)

These philosophers, among others, thought that such a claim needed not too much additional support; an invitation to inspect one's own perceptions was deemed perfectly sufficient to persuade any one of its truth.⁴⁷ In this vein, Berkeley declares that

[e]veryone is himself the best judge of what he perceives, and what not. In vain shall any man tell me various ideas of distance, so long as I myself am conscious of no such thing. (Berkeley 1975, sec. 12.)

⁴⁷ Although arguments to this effect were put forward as well, see e.g. Berkeley 1975, sec. 2. For discussion of such arguments, see Smith 2000.

I am not concerned here with the exact details of alleged 2-D awareness. Let me briefly point out, though, that such a view on the nature of phenomenal awareness is associated with epistemological positions that are either a type of representative realism, or some form of idealism. This is because what experience is like for the subject is crucial in our thinking about how the conscious mind meets the world. It is a characterisation of how the subject is aware of the world from the inside upon encountering it. When giving an account of conscious experience, the theorist will posit ontological ingredients that best explain the character of this experiential awareness. However, if phenomenal character of experience has a 2-D spatial character, the objects that best explain it will be different from the ordinary physical objects our perceptual beliefs are about. Resources other than just what is needed to explain how the subject is consciously aware in experience now have to be mustered to explain how our perceptual beliefs get to be about ordinary objects in the world. From the point of view of epistemology the consequence of such a stance on the character of experience is obvious: the most direct route to the world is blocked. Perceptual knowledge faces a gap between what we are consciously aware of in experience and what we believe the world is like. This gap seems to rule out Direct Realism, since that view holds that our knowledge of, and belief about, ordinary objects in the world is based on our immediate experiential awareness of these very same objects. There have been different reactions to this difficulty. One kind of reaction proposes to bridge the gap (Representative Realism); another kind accepts it (Idealism).

At any rate – and constituting yet another kind of reaction to the dilemma in the previous paragraph – the claim that we are visually aware of merely a 2-D spatial array has come under heavy fire since. According to such opponents, our conscious visual awareness is best described in terms of a 3-D visual array. They deny that the first conscious upshot of visual experience needs further interpretation in this respect. Proponents of this view of visual awareness are keen to stress a certain property that is thereby shown to be part of visual experience. This is that visual experience has ‘original intentionality’, that it possesses aboutness by its own nature. In virtue of being three-dimensional in character, the thought is, visual experience provides one with information *about* objects and their features. All of this, it is felt by some, gives one the advantage from the point of view of epistemology. In contrast with the 2-D view, the 3-D view is thought to open the door to Direct Realism (Smith 2000, esp.482-5). Of course, nobody would claim that the fact of 3-D phenomenology itself establishes Direct Realism. But it is held to make it a more plausible epistemological position,

since one important reason for rejecting it (namely 2-D phenomenal character) has thereby been removed (Strawson 1979, 47).

If this is so, it must surely be such a notion of spatial character that proponents of (S) have in mind. But in what sense does awareness of phenomenal three-dimensionality help – what is the phenomenological advantage with respect to the desired outcome of direct awareness of physical objects? I have said above that visual three-dimensionality supposedly provides experience with aboutness. As such, crucially, visual 3-D awareness is thought to involve the ideas of ‘outness’ and ‘distinctness’. It is assumed that such experience provides one with awareness of entities as apparently out there and distinct from oneself.

Phenomenal three-dimensionality immediately confers intentionality upon any experience that it characterizes, since it presents the subject with objects ostensibly distinct from himself. (Smith 2000, 511)

In order to get clear on the sense in which phenomenal three-dimensionality represents a step towards Direct Realism, we have to get clear on the sense in which one is aware of entities as distinct from oneself in such cases. How close do these characteristics get one to awareness of mind-independent physical objects?

At this point it is useful to look at Peacocke’s discussion of experience of depth (Peacocke 1983, esp. 13-6). He thinks the term ‘depth’ is ambiguous, picking out two distinct features of experience. What he has in mind, I think, is an ambiguity between depth-in-the-real-physical-world and depth-as-dimensionality-simpliciter (i.e. without any implication about the physical world). While for Peacocke the two kinds of depth are usually associated, the second can occur without the first.⁴⁸ He draws attention to reports from congenitally blind subjects who have spatial experience with the help of a tactile-vision substitution system (TVSS).

These sensations are arranged in a two-dimensional space, and they do not seem to the experiencer to be of objects in the space around him. That is, the space of the sensations is not experienced as bearing any spatial relations to the physical space in which the experience is located. The subjects report that the sensations are not as of anything ‘out there’. (Peacocke 1983, 15)

⁴⁸ Nonetheless, Peacocke thinks that both are properties of visual experience. (Although one of them is a intentional property, and, at this point in his career at least, intentional properties are tied up with possession of concepts). As we shall see, I argue that it is not clear that anything like depth-in-the-real-physical-world is part of the visual phenomenology of experience.

Based on this kind of case – which one might describe as quasi-visual – Peacocke suggests that the following scenario is conceivable. There could be a subject who has three-dimensional spatial visual experience that, just like in the two-dimensional case above, ostensibly lacks a connection to the physical space around the perceiver. Whatever is experienced by means of such experience, it is not the case that one experiences it as part of the physical space around one. One should note, though, Peacocke grants the subject in addition haptic (i.e. touch) experience of her physical surroundings.

Here then a sensational third dimension would be present; but there would be no representation of depth in the sense that the experience itself represents some things as being further away than other in the forward direction in the physical space in which the experiencer is located. (Peacocke 1983, 15)

According to Peacocke, this possibility shows that there is a sense of spatial depth experience that is not as of the mind-independent world. He also concludes that depth is ambiguous between a representational and a sensational property. For Peacocke, representational content is ‘the way the experience presents the world as being’ (7). This means that the representational properties constituting such content always concern ‘the world external to the perceiver’ (9), whereas sensational properties do not (they are non-representational). I am not interested here in the precise distinction between sensational and representational properties or related claims. Important in this context is what the conceivability of the scenario shows about experience with three-dimensional phenomenal character. Such experience presents one with three-dimensional entities out there. But they are not necessarily presented as of the mind-independent physical world. If they are not, there is a sense of ‘outness’ and ‘distinctness’ provided by the experience that does not implicate that such entities are part of a mind-independent physical perceptual environment. Here, outness and distinctness have to be understood in purely spatial terms: ‘outness’ is merely another word for depth and ‘distinctness’ means spatially distinct (from me as well as from other things). Think of experience of after-images: they can be experienced as next to each other, away from me, but are not thereby experienced as mind-independent.⁴⁹

It is a good question to ask how much the envisaged scenario depends on comparison with haptic experience of the physical environment. Perhaps awareness of lack of integration with

⁴⁹ Nor are after-images experienced as mind-dependent. Boghossian and Velleman 1997a, 86 put forward an argument parallel to (S), only that they claim that the spatial character of experiences of after-images entails that we are aware of the latter as mind-dependent. I reject their argument section (6) below.

one's environment in one experience can only arise when there is another kind of experience, simultaneously occurring, to compare it with. So, there may be nothing about the experience itself that gives the subject clues about whether it is as of things in the world or not. When deprived of any other kind of experience for sufficient amount of time, the subject might not be able to tell whether or not she is experiencing real space. Moreover, the subject could mistake 'mere space' for real physical space. In such a case, the subject would *take* the mere spatial scenario to be the physical environment around him. In so taking her experience there would be a sense in which it seemed to the subject as if she is aware of the physical world. But this would not be due to any awareness of the particular spatial character of her visual experiences. Importantly, this would not be a visual taking. How things seem to the subject visually would not be responsible for her taking what she sees to be as of the mind-independent world around her. Instead, it would be more plausible to hold that her taking herself to be aware of the mind-independent physical world is partly but importantly grounded in judgement and background belief. This suggests that the spatial character of such visual experience might simply be neutral with respect to ontological status of entities presented in it.

Against this, some will insist that when it comes to *our* ordinary visual experience it is clear enough that its spatial character is non-neutral. For, these people will say, the spatial character of ordinary experience is intimately bound up with the kind of entity presented to one in such experience. Lycan 1995, might be sympathetic to this line of thought:

[S]hapes etc. are physical or at least not immaterial. Here as before, that means, *represented as being* physical or at least not immaterial.... The shapes one sees in the peep-box are visually taken to be physical things of some sort, even if one suspects one is being toyed with and deliberately withholds one's assent to the drawing room perception. (Lycan 1995, 96)

Lycan is not completely clear on this issue, though. He is somewhat ambiguous between a negative and a positive claim, although the latter seems to receive slightly more support. The positive claim is that it is part of visual experience that shapes (visually) appear physical. The negative claim is that it is not part of visual experience that shapes (visually) appear immaterial. This negative claim is, of course, compatible with the idea that spatial character is neutral on ontological status. The positive claim is not. While physicality is not identical to mind-independence, the difference does not always matter too much in connection with discussions of visual appearance. I think that the very same idea – that the world is just presented to one – is thought to be captured by either of these terms.

So suppose someone, such as Lycan in the positive mood, does hold that the spatial character of our visual experience is not neutral at all. In order to characterise the way things spatially look to us, one must mention the kind of object presented to one in such experience. And these are three-dimensional physical objects and their properties. Spatial character is, in other words, *as of physical space*. When entities are visually presented to one as spatially located, they are presented to one as located in physical space. They look to be a certain kind of entity: namely, material mind-independent objects. So, yes, the distinctness and outness provided by mere three-dimensionality is not sufficient for awareness of mind-independence. It has to be distinctness and outness provided by three-dimensionality of *physical* space. And this, according to proponents of this line of thought, is what we find in ordinary experience.

But what does this in the end amount to? There are two parts to this line of thought: first, spatial character of experience must be specified with reference to the kind of entity given in it, and second, the presented entities look to us to be of a certain kind, namely the mind-independent, physical kind. To do any work in (S), both of these claims have to be true of how experience strikes us. The first part is very hard to assess in my view. As it stands it is a claim of a high level of generality. One needs to know whether just any kind specification will do, or whether a more selected group of kind properties is at issue here. If it is just any kind specification whatsoever, perhaps this is correct. Some kind property, such as colour and shape might be necessary to specify the spatial character of experience. Without some minimal reference to kinds one would not be able to characterise anything it seems. But more likely, a defender of the line of thought above would insist on a particular group of kind properties, namely metaphysical or ontological kinds. This I do not see. In the next section, I discuss one way one might make sense of it, but as will become apparent, this would not have the import a defender of (S) needs.

The second part of the line of thought is just (MI). But this is the claim that (S) was supposed to help us establish. So if, in order to get the right notion of spatial character for (S), I have to accept (MI) already, (S) is at a minimum redundant. For, once I accept the (MI) I am done. There would be no need anymore to use an appeal to spatial character to establish this claim. Worse still, since (S) is supposed to be our route to accepting (MI), it must fail if the notion of spatial character serving in the antecedent only p-entails (MI) by presupposing it.

In conclusion, we have seen that three-dimensionality may provide for ostensible outness and distinctness, but not ostensible mind-independence. Furthermore, the thought that the spatial character of our ordinary experience is as of physical, mind-independent space seems crucially to require a prior acceptance of (MI). So, in the absence of a new way of arguing for (MI), to say that ordinary experience is as of mind-independent physical space just is another way of claiming that mind-independence is bluntly part of the phenomenology. But it was dissatisfaction with this idea that started off the attempt to support (MI) via (S).

In the next section I will look at a different avenue of support a proponent of (S) might choose. Instead of concentrating, as we did in this section, on an alleged feature of spatial character (i.e. three-dimensionality), we are now going to focus on a proposal about a particular conceptual connection between space and mind-independence.

(5) A conceptual connection between space and mind-independence

There is a line of thought - which may be appreciated as the 'Kant-Strawson-Evans-line' (KSE line) - which tries to make a case for a conceptual connection between space and mind-independence in our conception of experience.⁵⁰ The willingness to assert the availability of mind-independence to introspection could perhaps rely on this line of thought. The exact reasoning of the main argument is complicated and does not matter for our purposes. In a nutshell, though, the KSE line runs as follows. We start with the assumption that our conception of experience centrally involves a notion of experience as experience of objects that are capable of existing unperceived. This, it is further shown, requires a sensible ordering (in addition to, and distinct from, temporal ordering) of those objects in experience. It is then argued that such sensible ordering has to be spatial or at least analogous to spatial ordering.⁵¹

⁵⁰ The classic places to find the 'Kant-Strawson-Evans-line' are Strawson's interpretation of Kant's view on experience in the *Critique of Pure Reason* as found in Strawson 1966, and Strawson's own view as influenced by Kant, esp. in Strawson 1959, esp. Ch. 2, and, Evans' view and his discussion of Strawson in Evans 1985. Strawson and Evans both use the term 'objectivity' for the idea of existence independently of perception. I will continue to use 'mind-independence' for this idea.

⁵¹ There are differences between the three philosophers as to the precise requirement: Kant (according to Strawson) thought that spatial ordering is necessary for experience to be objective, i.e. in his terminology, space is an a priori form of intuition. (But see comment at end of this footnote.) Strawson held the weaker thesis that some sensible ordering analogous to space is necessary (Strawson 1959, ch.2, Strawson 1966, pp.50-51). Evans argues that the simple spatial analogy proposed by Strawson does not provide for conditions requisite for objectivity but that what is required instead is a simultaneous conception of space. A brief comment on Kant. It is not clear what the position expressed in Kant 1929 would amount to in this context. For one thing, Kant holds that experience is a combination of intuition and concepts in view of which he is, on many interpretations, accused of an idealist view neither Strawson nor Evans have any sympathy for. Moreover, although on Kant's view, space is necessary for objective experience - space is an a priori form of intuition - it is not in virtue of this

I first want to point out that in the relevant works by Strawson and Evans the direction of investigation goes from the idea of mind-independence to the idea of space. They ask, in other words, whether for experience to be experience as of mind-independent objects, it has to be as of things ordered in space.⁵² This is not what is at issue in the context of our discussion. We are interested in the other direction; whether, given that our experience is as of spatial entities and their relations between them, it is thereby as of mind-independent objects. So, the main intent of the KSE-line is to show that there is a conceptual entailment in, what is for our purposes, the wrong direction. On the basis of this alone we are given no reason to think that it also holds in the other direction, that is, from space to mind-independence.

There is reason to think that proponents of the KSE-line would answer this question affirmatively, though. I now want to look at the case for a connection in the other direction, i.e. from experience as of spatial entities to experience as of mind-independent entities, contained in the KSE-line. I argue that this still falls short of providing the proponent of (S) with what she needs. Recall that what is needed in support of (S) is a good reason to accept the claim that in virtue of introspectively reflecting on experience with a certain spatial character one comes to be introspectively aware of presented entities as mind-independent. Also, let me remind you of the general worry I articulated in section (3). There I argued that we cannot simply take for granted that a conceptual connection is phenomenologically significant. So even if there is an important conceptual entailment between experiencing something spatial and experiencing something mind-independent, this does not in and of itself show that experiencing something as spatial p-entails experiencing it as mind-independent. Returning to the specific proposal at hand, I first set out what I take to be the positive line of reasoning by the KSE-line in favour of an entailment from space to objectivity. I concentrate on Evans' argument, who takes his cue from some comments Strawson makes on this issue. I then argue that one should understand this as an argument for a conceptual connection which does not have a bearing on visual phenomenology. At least, I point out, if understood as a claim about visual phenomenology, the notion of visual phenomenology must be very broad – so broad, in fact, that it becomes questionable why it particularly deserves the epithet 'visual'.

alone that experience is objective. Crucially, objectivity is only established in the *Analytic* with the involvement of judgement, specifically, in the famously intractable *Transcendental Deduction*.

⁵² Evans 1985, 249 'If someone has a conception of a world, something whose existence and operations are independent of his experience of it, must he thereby conceive of a system of spatial relations in which both he and the phenomena he experiences have a place?'

Strawson, in putting forward his auditory analogue of a spatial universe, argues that what the idea of independent existence of the things we experience requires can be satisfied by experience of particulars in a purely auditory realm. In his auditory universe, the auditory analogues for distance and location depend on change in the pitch of a master sound. The analogy is very weak, he concedes, for nothing experienced in the auditory universe would exhibit anything that could count as an auditory analogue of spatial relations among several particulars in a visual scene at a moment. Given this concession, Strawson expects that somebody might object as follows:

But surely the idea of simultaneous existence of the perceived and the unperceived is linked with this idea of the simultaneous presentation of elements, each of a definite character, but simultaneously exhibiting a system of relations over and above those which arise from the definite character of each. Surely the former idea is necessarily an extension of the latter, is just the idea of such a system of relations extending beyond the limits of observation. (Strawson 1959, 80)

Strawson does not think this is a decisive objection to his own proposal.⁵³ According to him it merely shows that the auditory analogue of space is incomplete, that is to say, not every spatial feature can be matched with an auditory counterpart.

Evans disagrees (Evans 1985, part IV). He insists that Strawson has failed to address the deeper worry behind the objection. At the centre of the objection, according to Evans, lies a distinction between two kinds of spatial concepts, namely between serial spatial concepts and simultaneous spatial concepts. These concepts find application in two distinct ways to detect spatial facts. Take a spatial fact such as three objects, o_1 , o_2 , and o_3 being arranged in a straight line. Somebody might establish the fact that o_2 lies between o_1 and o_3 on the basis of a temporal relation between experiences of the three objects. In this case the subject would apply a serial spatial concept, which is based on successive experiences of o_1 , o_2 , and o_3 . But a subject with the sense of sight might just see that o_2 lies between o_1 and o_3 . On such occasion, she would apply a simultaneous spatial concept, which is based on an experience of all three objects simultaneously. Possession of concepts of each kind has distinct requirements and enables the

⁵³ He also holds that the positive proposal in the objection is incomplete as it stands because, in his opinion, the extension of the idea of simultaneous existence perceived to simultaneous existence unperceived further requires ideas of movement (of scene and observing subject relative to each other) and change. So, he thinks the objection should merely state that exhibiting spatial relations among simultaneously existing things is a necessary condition but not a sufficient condition for such an extension. (Strawson 1959, 80)

subject to do different kinds of reasoning involving them. According to Evans, Strawson recognises that a subject in his auditory universe can possess only a serial spatial concept. It is this recognition that prompts Strawson to consider the objection quoted above. But, Evans argues, the real thrust of the objection goes unanswered. For, what is put into doubt is whether a subject possessing merely a serial spatial concept can be credited with an idea of mind-independent existence at all. That is to say, Evans thinks that the view or 'theory' that the subject is provided with in terms of her experience and such concepts, cannot be one that is of an objective world. By contrast, Evans claims, this worry does not exist if the subject has at her disposal simultaneous spatial concepts. According to him, a theory involving such concepts also manifests the idea of an independently existing world.

Certainly, any theory using simultaneous spatial concepts does genuinely embody the idea of an independently existing reality, the idea of the perceived and the unperceived existing simultaneously and in exactly the same sense. (Evans 1985, 287)

Why is that? In the context of our overall discussion of phenomenal character in this chapter, this is exactly the crucial issue: do we have here something that could provide the basis for a line of reasoning in defence of (S)? The paragraph just quoted continues:

If *a*, *b*, and *c* are envisaged to lie upon a straight line, when what is envisaged is an instance of the simultaneous concept – a concept whose most direct application lies in a presentation of the three elements *a*, *b*, and *c* together – then *a*, *b*, and *c* must thereby be conceived to exist in exactly the same way. If *a*, *b* and *c* are believed to exist in such an arrangement when *b* is perceived and *a* and *c* are not, then *a* and *c* are conceived to exist, though not perceived, in exactly the sense in which *b*, now perceived, exists.

The thought is that a representation of simultaneous spatial existence of more than one element provides one with the materials to obtain the idea of mind-independence via the idea of such existence continuing unperceived. Let us break the argument down into its components.

- P1: The spatial representation of elements *a*, *b*, and *c* together involves application of a simultaneous spatial concept.
- P2: If *a*, *b*, and *c* are simultaneously represented to lie on a straight line, then *a*, *b*, and *c* must thereby be conceived to exist each in the same way.
- C1: If *a*, *b*, and *c* are believed to exist in that arrangement and only *b* is perceived, then *a* and *c* are conceived to exist unperceived in the same way that the currently perceived *b* exists.
- C2: Therefore the existence of *a*, *b*, and *c* is conceived of as independent of actual perception.

There is a lot one could say about this argument. My discussion falls into two parts. First, I state two straightforward objections to the argument. Secondly, I argue that even if the argument were successful, it does not amount to a defence of (S). I suggest that Evans' thesis concerning a connection between spatial representation and objective representation is not reasonably understood to be about visual phenomenal character.

The first objection to the argument is directed at P2. This claim is false. It is not true that in simultaneously representing three distinct elements in a straight line one has to conceive of them as existing in the same way. Suppose you sit with a group of friends around a table and one of them takes a picture with a flash slightly to the right side of you. The flash causes you to experience an after-image on the right side of your visual field. As you look at two of your friends across the table this after-image persists to appear next to them for a while. So you have an experience as of two faces and an after-image in a straight line. But you do not have to conceive of the three as existing in the same way. It is likely that you conceive of the after-image as existing in a very different way than the two faces you see. Given the possibility of conceiving differently of the existence of three elements simultaneously represented, C1 does not follow from P2 and hence C2 does not follow either.

The second objection to the argument is aimed at C1. Even if the claim in P2 were true, the claim in C1 would not follow. Suppose you are a famous person, who has to walk the gauntlet of paparazzi to get to some reception with other famous people. As soon as you step out of your limousine, cameras start clicking and flashlights go off. As it happens, three of them go off at the same time next to each other as you look into the crowd. Looking down at the pavement, you experience three after-images lined up next to each other. Suppose you conceive of them as existing in the same way – as having a mind-dependent existence. Now, clearly, step three does not follow. For suppose after a while only the third obnoxiously persists – perhaps the flash was brighter than the other two. You would not conceive of the other ones as existing unperceived. So, C1 is false and C2 does not follow either.

One might respond to both of these objections by saying that I have failed to recognise the special nature of the simultaneous spatial concept at work in the argument. In fact, a representation involving application of such a concept can only be of certain sorts of entity, namely material objects. In other words, there cannot be a representation of after-images by

means of this concept. So, my objections founder because what I took to be counter-examples to P2 and C1 are already ruled out by the kind of concept a simultaneous spatial concept is. There are two points to make in reply to this response. The short reply is that if one stipulates that the spatial concepts in question only apply to material mind-independent objects then that makes the argument designed to establish this fact obsolete. The longer reply takes into account other details of Evans' view that do suggest a (more sophisticated) version of the reply along the lines just given. It is contained in the second part of my discussion I will turn to now. And, as I will argue, taking this route leads to a controversial and conceptually highly involved notion of experience. The visual phenomenological significance of this notion of experience is less than clear.

So set aside the objections to Evans' argument and turn to the question in what sense the argument, if successful, would lend support to (S). First, assume that the spatial representation that is mentioned in P1 is a visual experience. The argument merely shows that experience of a simultaneous spatial array is a possible starting condition for the idea of objectivity. For, apart from having the experience, the argument requires the subject to perform other kinds of cognitive feats, involving the acquisition of certain beliefs and inferences made on the basis of them. Based on the experience in P1, the subject is said to acquire the belief that the three elements exist in that spatial arrangement. Then the subject has a further experience, this time representing merely one of the elements. Given her previous belief, the subject thus comes to acquire the beliefs that the other two elements exist unperceived and that all the elements exist in a manner independent of the subject's perception. The latter move involves two separate inferences. This variety of cognitive activity is important for understanding Evans' argument. It suggests that he would not maintain that merely in having a given visual experience involving simultaneous presentation of elements one comes to be *visually* aware of objects as existing mind-independently. Indeed, according to the argument, one needs at least two separate experiences. One is reminded of the caution expressed by Strawson on this score, which I mentioned in footnote 53. He said that for the idea of objective reality to get off the ground, spatial representation requires assistance from some notion of change. At any rate, it does not appear to be the case that proponents of the KSE-line positively advocate the claim that merely having an experience involving simultaneous spatial representation is sufficient for one to be aware of objects as existing mind-independently.

This impression finds further support in some of the details of Evans's view. For instance, he places emphasis on the application of a *simultaneous spatial concept*, as opposed to a mere *simultaneous spatial presentation of elements in experience*, drawing a distinction between application of the concept and mere experiential presentation. Specifically, although perhaps the most straightforward application of the concept is to the simultaneous spatial presentation of several elements in experience, this should not be taken to mean that the concept could be derived from just such experience.⁵⁴ The reason for this is a distinction Evans draws between sensory or secondary properties and non-sensory or primary properties (Evans 1985, part III). According to him, primary properties are those, understanding of which requires that one master a certain amount of theory, e.g. a primitive mechanics or common sense physics. These properties have sense for one only in the context of such a theory and they relate to experience under this proviso. Thus, although such properties may be perfectly sensible or observable (as distinguished from sensory), it is not possible to derive their concepts out of the mere experience. Some 'appropriate training' is required for one to be able to make empirical observations involving these properties (269-70).⁵⁵ Importantly, Evans holds that

the properties constitutive of the idea of material substance as *space-occupying stuff* should be acknowledged to be primary. These include properties of bodies immediately consequential upon the idea of space-occupation – position, shape, size, motion; properties applicable to a body in virtue of the primary properties of its spatial parts.... (269)

So there are important spatial concepts, namely those connected with the notion of a material object that are firmly ensconced in theory and not merely experiential. Evans contrasts this kind of spatial concept with a spatial concept that is based only on experience and thus be properly called a sensory property.

[It] does not appear to be possible to regard the conception of the shape of a material thing – with all the propositions about its characteristic behaviour and interaction with other bodies which that implies – as the same as whatever shape concepts might be grounded in the colour mosaic thought to be given in immediate visual experience. (270)

The two kinds of spatial concepts – the primary property concept and secondary property concept – must be related in some way, and to this extent they may both be experience-dependent. But what makes for their difference is the further heavy theory-dependence of the

⁵⁴ "[This] characterisation [of the concept] must in no way be taken to suggest that such concepts can be extracted from just an experience in which distinct elements are simultaneously presented." Evans 1985, 284, fn43.

⁵⁵ For a similar view concerning notions of objects see Firth 1965, 250-2.

former, whereas the latter is merely experience-dependent. This difference is perhaps reflected in a distinction Evans appears to draw, between ways in which one can make sense of elements filling space or being spatial. He talks of an element ‘occupying space’ in contrast to it ‘merely being located in space’ (280). It would seem that primary property spatial concepts allow one to conceive of something’s occupying space, whereas secondary property spatial concepts only yield a weaker notion, that of something’s being located in space. The thought must be that space-occupancy is intimately connected with the notion of an ordinary material object, as it emerges in the context of a primitive mechanical theory. Spatial location, on the other hand, is not so tied to a theory and it is weaker in the sense that an element can be spatially located without there being any strong implication as to what notion of entity we are concerned with.⁵⁶ One might then suggest that while experience on its own provides the basis for awareness of spatial location, it does not yield any awareness of space occupancy.

At any rate, given his insistence on theory-dependence it is not obvious whether, when discussing the connection between space and mind-independence, Evans has any interest in making claims about visual experience and its character in particular, rather than about *empirical thought* in general. Setting Evans’ own interests aside, though, could one not use the KSE line to support (S)? Not in any obvious way. If, as we have seen, the conceptual connection between spatial character and mind-independence is based on a theory-dependent concept, the notion of experience it involves to must be a very broad notion that sustains heavy conceptual involvement. It is not clear to me that why such a notion of experience deserves to be thought of as particularly visual and its character as visual phenomenal character.

I conclude, then, that the KSE-line cannot be used to show that introspection reveals the apparent mind-independence of entities presented to one in experience via the spatial character of the latter. In other words, the KSE-line does not lend support to (S).

In the next and last section I discuss and attack a particular proposal to the effect that the spatial character of after-images brings about the appearance of mind-dependence of these entities. In rejecting this proposal, I aim to make sure that it is understood that my opposition to (S) is not grounded in the claim that introspection reveals that it is as if one is presented

⁵⁶ Another way to put this distinction: location answers to a question about where something is, while occupation answers to a question about how something inhabits this location.

with mind-dependent objects and their properties. I do not hold that introspection of what experience is like reveals *any* apparent ontological status of the entities presented to one.

(6) After-images and mind-dependence

The move from introspective awareness of certain spatial features of phenomenal character to introspective awareness of their mode of existence, is not only made by those concerned with the appearance of mind-independence. Boghossian and Velleman argue that what experience of after-images is like includes the feature of mind-dependence (Boghossian and Velleman 1997a, 85-6). Again, the particular spatial phenomenology of experiences of after-images plays a prime role in the argument: the explanation for the apparent mind-dependence of after-images is based on how after-images appear to be located in space.

The argument is part of a line of reasoning designed to show that a dispositional account of colour experience gets into trouble when after-images are considered (85-6). Let me briefly summarise their overall line of reasoning and then turn to the specific argument we are interested in. The overall line of reasoning contains five main steps:

1. After-images are seen to have colours in the same way as ordinary objects are seen to have colours.
2. Dispositional accounts analyse, say, yellow as the object's disposition to appear yellow under standard conditions.
3. After-images are seen to exist in a manner dependent on one's current perception of them.
4. An entity seen as existing in a perception-dependent manner cannot also be seen to be disposed to appear some colour under standard conditions. Standard conditions require that the entity exists perception-independently.
5. Given the truth of (1.) and (3.), the dispositional account of colour is false.

The argument contains four premises, two of which – (1.) and (3.) – are straightforward claims about visual phenomenology. (2.) is a claim about dispositional analyses of colour and (4.) spells out a constraint on visual presentation. I am mainly concerned with how premise (3.) is established. Before getting to that, though, I want to comment briefly on premises (1.) and (4.). Neither of these two claims strike me as obvious. As for premise (1.), I would be inclined to say it is false that after-images and ordinary objects appear coloured in a relevantly similar way. Of course, based on my own view, such an introspection-based judgement should not count as good evidence that (1.) is false, even if I were convinced of it (see especially chapter 5). But, I

would not balk if a proponent of Dispositionalism simply denied (1.). She could hold a disjunctive view of colour experience overall which would allow her to account for colour experience of ordinary objects in dispositional terms while not doing so for after-images. At the very least, denying (1.) is no more or less well-grounded than affirming it.

Concerning premise (4.), I want to point out that we can be aware of features in experience that are in fact mutually exclusive and in that sense contradicting. Escher paintings and pictures of ‘impossible objects’ serve as examples here. They show scenarios or things that are physically and perhaps even conceptually impossible. Now, this does not mean that anything goes. Arguably an object cannot appear both as red and blue, or both as square and round. Red and blue, round and square are features that are mutually exclusive in phenomenal terms. So the question is whether the features Boghossian and Velleman are talking about are mutually exclusive in phenomenal terms, i.e. whether together they are phenomenally impossible. One of the features in question is ‘existing in a perception-dependent manner’ (i.e. mind-dependence); the other feature is ‘appearing some colour under standard conditions’. For two features to be together phenomenally impossible, each feature must at least *be* a phenomenal feature. But one might deny that the features under consideration in premise (4.) are of the phenomenal kind. And, of course, in this very chapter, I am arguing that ontological status – mind-independence or mind-dependence – is not part of visual phenomenology.

But our attention is reserved for premise (3.) and what Boghossian and Velleman say in its favour. Here is how they put the matter:

But after-images are not seen as material objects, ... The items involved in these experiences are not perceived as existing independently of being perceived. On the one hand, the after-image is seen as located before one’s eyes, rather than in one’s mind, where visual memories are seen... But on the other hand, one does not perceive these items as actually existing in the locations to which they are subjectively referred. ...[T]he after-image is seen as overlaying the thin air before one’s eyes, where there is visibly nothing to see. ...[T]he image [is thus perceived] as a figment or projection of one’s eye’s: ... in short, [it is] perceived as existing only in so far as one is perceiving [it]. (Boghossian and Velleman 1997a, 86)

Boghossian and Velleman hold that one does not see after-images as material objects because the latter, in contrast to the former, are seen as existing independently of being experienced. The explanation for this has to do with how after-images are seen to be located in space. According to Boghossian and Velleman, after-images are seen as located ‘before one’s eyes’, just like ordinary material objects. This means, I take it, that after-images share a space with

ordinary objects; from which it follows that it is at least possible in principle that an ordinary object and an after-image could trade location. However, they differ in how each is seen to occupy this space. Unlike ordinary material objects, after-images are seen 'as overlaying the thin air before one's eyes, where there is visibly nothing to see'. It is on the basis of this that after-images are seen as not perception-independently existing in the location they occupy from the point of view of the subject. Instead, they are seen as mind-dependent projections. And so, on Boghossian's and Velleman's view, premise (3.) is established.

I want to focus on the move from the claim about how an after-image is seen to occupy its spatial location to the claim about how it is seen to exist. Let us ignore any questions about the aptness of the specific characterisation offered. I therefore grant, for the sake of the argument, that what it is like for one to experience an after-image involves it 'overlaying the thin air before one's eyes, where there is visibly nothing to see'. Although, if truth be told, I do not know really what to make of especially the second part of the characterisation. What does it mean to say that it looks to one as if there is visibly nothing to see? As best as I can make sense of it, I suggest that what Boghossian and Velleman have in mind is that after-images are not seen as located in space to the same determinate degree as ordinary objects. More positively, they hold that after-images are seen as having indeterminate location in space.

The question under consideration, then, is whether the apparent indeterminacy in spatial location of after-images as it is revealed in introspection phenomenally entails the apparent mind-dependence of these entities. I think not. How things appear to me spatially when I experience an after-image leave wide open the question of whether this is an entity that could also be seen by somebody else, whether it could exist independently of my experience of it or anyone else's experience of it. For instance, it is easy to imagine a world in which there exist entities that look like after-images, hovering around in their (indeterminate) location but which are perceptible by more than one person at a time. Keep in mind that Boghossian and Velleman did not claim that after-images appear to have no spatial location. On the contrary, they hold that after-images are seen to be located in the same space that ordinary physical objects are seen to be located. It is also possible to imagine that these after-image-looking entities are entities that are only perceptible under standard conditions. Perhaps for these entities to become visible to a human perceiver, it has to be dusk or night and one has to look into a bright light beforehand. Moreover, given that they have some shape and colour, as well

as spatial location, one might even be able to recognise them again. Such a world populated by after-image-looking entities is easily visually imagined.

The point is that there is nothing in the spatial appearance of after-images that would rule out, or at the very least make it difficult to conjure up, such a world in imagination. Suppose someone asks me to imagine a world with blue tomatoes. This is easy to do, but I have to change the appearance properties of tomatoes. Normally tomatoes appear to be red. I cannot visually imagine a world with blue tomatoes without changing how tomatoes appear in the actual world. No such change is required in order to imagine a world with after-image-looking entities. Specifically, one does not have to change how they appear spatially. But in the imagined world, they are entities that have independent existence, they are visible under standard conditions and an observer is able to recognise them again. At a minimum, it is unclear what an observer would make of their ontological status. The spatial appearance is compatible with either, their mind-dependence or their mind-independence.

However, it might be argued that there is a commitment to the mind-dependence of after-images on the basis of our concept of an after-image. After-images, as we conceive of them, are mind-dependent entities. They cannot fail to seem dependent on our experience of them. This may well be true. But, in so far as the above scenario is coherently imaginable, this conceptual commitment is not grounded in the visual spatial appearance of after-images. Of course, the imagined entities would not be after-images, they would simply look like them. The way in which our after-images seem to be mind-dependent entities must be grounded in something other than visual appearance.

There is another fact about after-images, related to their spatial character, which might be thought to make them appear to be mind-dependent. When one stands in a room, looking into bright sunlight coming through the window and then turns to look at a bookshelf in a shadowy corner, it is usually the case that one experiences a window-shaped after-image on the shelf. But when one moves one's gaze across the rows of books, the after-image moves along, remaining at a fixed location in one's visual field. This dependence on its location in the visual field may be thought to make it appear that the after-image is independent of what is out there in the physical world you are observing, and therefore yield an appearance of mind-dependence. This is obviously false. A tiny scratch on the lens of one's eye appears as a speck

in one's visual field, moving along with one's gaze. It, too, appears independent of the particular scene before one's eyes. But there is hardly an appearance of mind-dependence here.

Now, I doubt that the above line of reasoning about after-images would in fact be tempting for more than two seconds. However, it serves well to bring out a general point which will connect us back with the overall theme of this chapter. In the previous paragraph I presented a move from allegedly observing that after-images do not seem to be part of the physical scene before one's eyes to the claim that they must be mind-dependent entities. This reflects a prejudice, evident in much of the current literature on perception, about what counts as a viable ontological option for an account of phenomenal properties. In turn, this often informs views about visual appearances.⁵⁷ Nowadays, the only permissible choice is generally taken to be between mind-dependent, non-physical objects and mind-independent, physical objects. But, if we look back to the philosophy of perception in the first half of the 20th century, we quickly encounter a third option, namely mind-independent but non-physical objects. In other words, abstract objects. Some versions of Sense Data Theory famously championed this option. They held that sense data are abstract, mind-independent objects.⁵⁸ This option is hardly ever taken seriously anymore, not to mention argued for. Indeed, in first considering the unattractive line of thought in the previous paragraph, I suspect most would not have countenanced the idea that the after-image, or the speck in one's visual field might be an abstract entity. However, the current unpopularity is not due to enhanced (or diminished) phenomenal awareness, but to ontological preferences. It is a decision made *before* coming to consider one's visual phenomenology.

The reason I mention this here is to bring out a general point about phenomenal character and our alleged awareness of ontological status. Consider a wider range of options about the ontological status of entities – i.e. mind-dependent, mind-independent physical, and mind-independent abstract. The task of deciding on purely phenomenal grounds whether the entities one is presented with in experience appear to belong in either of these categories is much more formidable than when merely the two most opposing options are taken into account. If one were inclined to believe – as I certainly am not – that introspection reveals whether one is presented with special mind-dependent objects or with ordinary physical mind-independent

⁵⁷ For a discussion of this prejudice in the philosophy of perception, see Crane 2000, 188.

⁵⁸ H.H. Price, and at one stage G.E Moore, held such views. More recently, a lonely figure defending this view is Robinson 1994.

objects, one would have to acknowledge that matters are much more complicated when all the options are considered. If an entity were to appear to be mind-independent, this would still leave undetermined whether it appears to be a non-physical abstract object or a physical concrete object instead. Similarly, if an object were to appear not to be an ordinary physical mind-independent object, one would still have to decide whether it appears to be a mind-dependent object of sorts or an abstract mind-dependent object. So now it seems, physicality and non-physicality, concrete-ness and abstractness also have to be features one has to be introspectively aware of. This must erode some of the plausibility that might have been thought to attach to the claim that introspection of visual phenomenology reveals apparent ontological status of entities presented in experience.

This concludes my discussion of the appeal to transparency. In the previous chapter I showed that this appeal comprises two independent claims, (LT) and (MI). I then argued that (LT) might be thought to be acceptable – although I also gave some reasons not to think so – but that it can be accommodated by all the four main views of the nature of experience. In this chapter I turned my attention to (MI). (MI) is where, with respect to the Standard Method, all the action is. If (MI) were true then Intentionalism and Naïve Realism could be shown to be much more plausible views of the metaphysics of experience than their rivals. If, that is, introspection of what experience is like reveals that it is as if mind-independent objects and their properties are before one, Intentionalism and Naïve Realism can provide an account of phenomenal character that is phenomenally much more adequate than Sense Datum Theory or the Mental Paint View. For the latter two claim that in introspection of what experience is like we are aware of special sensory objects or mental paint properties. According to (MI), there is introspective evidence for neither of these claims. But in this chapter I have argued that (MI) is unacceptable. This makes the overall appeal to appeal to transparency illegitimate. And without (MI), an appeal to transparency based merely on (LT) is, although perhaps acceptable, entirely useless from the point of view of the Standard Method.

Chapter 4

The Presentational Feature

(1) Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss another main claim about visual phenomenology that some users of the Standard Method draw attention to. This claim, too, concerns a certain phenomenal feature revealed to one in introspection of what experience is like. Focus on the particular feature is primarily associated with defenders of Sense Datum Theory. This is because they usually put forward a principle about the nature of phenomenal character, namely the Phenomenal Principle. The Phenomenal Principle says that when it looks to one as if, say, there is a green square in front of one, then there really is an object that has the properties green and square, to which one is directly related. Sense Datum Theorists claim that this principle is grounded in a particular feature of what experience is like. This is the feature I will investigate in this chapter.

Given the popularity of claims involving this feature among the now very unfashionable Sense Datum Theory it might be assumed that it is easy prey for critical attack. Interestingly, this is not so. In some ways, it is much more difficult to contest than the feature I have discussed in the previous chapter. In contrast to my critique of the mind-independence feature, I allow that there is something answering to this feature in phenomenal character. However, I argue that once understood correctly, it is hopeless as a constraint on building one's metaphysics of experience.

In the first two sections, I set out and clarify the Phenomenal Principle and the feature supposedly grounding it in phenomenal character, as it is characterised by Sense Datum Theorists. Then, in section (4), I consider another characterisation of this feature, which can be found among defenders of Intentionalism. In section (5) I compare the two characterisations. I show that proponents of Sense Datum Theory cannot sensibly hold anything more than is encompassed by the characterisation of the feature favoured by Intentionalists. Finally, in section (6), I argue that on this more plausible characterisation of this feature of phenomenal character, it is not sufficient to recommend the Phenomenal Principle, rather than another alternative Intentionalist principle. But this throws into doubt the whole idea that the feature in question provides a *grounding* for any of these principles.

(2) The Phenomenal Principle

In the Sense Datum Theory literature, one finds frequent explicit or implicit acceptance of what Robinson (1994) calls the 'Phenomenal Principle'. This principle makes the following claim about what experience is like.

(Phen) If it looks to a subject as if there is an F before her, then there actually exists something that has F and that the subject is aware of.

In other words, to have a visual experience as of some F is to be aware of an actual object that possesses the sensory property F. Suppose you are having a visual experience as of a red ball. On introspecting what your experience is like, it looks to you as if there is a red and round thing before you. According to (Phen) you are aware of an actually existing object that possesses the sensory properties redness and roundness. Robinson explicitly states the principle as follows:

If there sensibly appears to a subject to be something which possesses a particular sensible quality then there is something of which the subject is aware which does possess that sensible quality. (Robinson 1994, 32)

Another defender of (Phen), C. D. Broad, presents it as part of his version of Sense Datum Theory, the theory of *sensa*. I have highlighted the relevant part in the passage below:

We may generalise this theory of sensible appearance [i.e. the theory of *sensa*] as follows: *Whenever I truly judge that x appears to me to have the sensible quality q, what happens is that I am directly aware of a certain object y, which (a) really does have the quality q, and (b) stands in some peculiarly intimate relation, yet to be determined, to x.* (Broad 1965a, 89)

From Broad's quote we can also see how the Sense Datum Theory satisfies (Phen). The theory postulates that an experience is built from an acquaintance relation between the subject and a special sensory object which really does possess the sensory properties the subject is aware of. However, note that (Phen) is not identical to the Sense Datum Theory, nor does it support the Sense Datum Theory exclusively. (Phen) says that when it looks to a subject as if there is an F before her, then there actually exists something that has F and that she is aware of. Two other views of experience may be thought to be compatible with (Phen) as well. Consider the Multiple Location Theory, which is a slightly less naïve version of Naïve Realism. It holds that veridical and certain illusory experience is built from a relation between a subject and an

ordinary physical object and its sensible properties.⁵⁹ The properties that the subject is aware of when reflecting on what such experience is like are actually had by the object. Some of these are properties that are relativised to places; the idea is that from a particular place, a coin, say, really has the property of being elliptical. According to this view, part of what we are aware of in being aware of the coin are its ‘multiply located’ properties. The other view of experience compatible with (Phen) is standard Naïve Realism. It says that veridical experience is built from an acquaintance relation between a subject and a public object and its sensible properties. Hence, when it looks to the subject as if there is an F before her, Naïve Realists hold that there is an object before the subject that really has the properties she is aware of. On both of these two theories, the experiencing subject is related to an ordinary, public object that actually possesses the properties she is aware of – hence their compatibility with (Phen). Multiple Location Theory and Naïve Realism are only concerned with veridical experience and certain kinds of illusion. While they endorse (Phen) with respect to those types of experience, they stay silent on the other types (e.g. hallucinations).

This silence on other types of experience may lead one to think that the Sense Datum Theory still satisfies (Phen) better than either the Multiple Location Theorists and Naïve Realists because it covers all types of experience. After all, the latter two theories do seem to owe a story as to what to say about delusory experience. But proponents of these theories might just deny that (Phen) is applicable in these other cases. That is, they might deny that when one undergoes a hallucinatory experience as of some F before one, it genuinely looks to one as if there is an F before one. (Rather, they will insist, it merely seems to one as if this is so.) Hence, these theorists might be able to augment their accounts to deal with illusions and hallucinations.⁶⁰

The three views compatible with (Phen) also differ in the kinds of properties they are prepared to attribute to the object of experience. Naïve Realism holds that these are ordinary properties that we common-sensically attribute to ordinary objects on the basis of perception, such as being a tomato, being a house, blueness and roundness, etc. The Multiple Location Theory, as we have seen, holds that there are two kinds of property one is aware of in reflecting on experience, both of which are had by ordinary objects. One kind of property is had by the object *simpliciter*, the other kind is had by the object relative to a place. Most Sense Datum

⁵⁹ See Robinson 1994, 44–8 for discussion of this view.

⁶⁰ See, for instance, Martin forthcoming for a defence of Naïve Realism on this score.

Theorists, by contrast, hold that introspection of what experience is like reveals only a limited range of properties. These are usually basic colour, shape and location properties (e.g. Jackson 1977, 33). This is a significant difference among the three theories. It concerns which kinds of feature each claims one is aware of when introspectively reflecting on experience – it is therefore a difference in what they say experience is like. This dispute cannot be settled by (Phen), however. The principle is too general to record the difference in kinds of property. It seems we would have to look to a more detailed expression of what experience is like to resolve this disagreement.

These considerations show that (Phen) cannot be taken to constitute the sole case in favour of the Sense Datum Theory. Certainly, the main mark of the Sense Datum Theory – the metaphysically special objects, sense data, *sensa* – is not justified by appeal to such introspective evidence alone. To be fair, though, friends and foes of the Sense Datum Theory are often clear about this.⁶¹ And if true, (Phen) does rule out some of the available theories. Specifically, it is not compatible with standard Intentionalist theories of visual experience. The latter hold that the features one is aware of when introspecting what experience is like are represented properties. By contrast, (Phen) requires that there are properties instantiated in an object of experience with which the subject is acquainted.

Although we have just seen that proponents of theories of visual experience other than Sense Datum Theory may favour the Phenomenal Principle, I will continue to consider it through the eyes of Sense Datum Theorists throughout my discussion in this chapter. This simplifies exposition of the issues; the criticisms put forward are meant, *mutatis mutandis*, to apply to any theory that employs the Phenomenal Principle.

Following the passage quoted above, Broad goes on to give us an instance of his version of the Sense Datum Theory:

Thus, when I look at a penny from the side, what happens, on the present theory, is at least this: I have a sensation, whose object is an elliptical, brown *sensum*....

Hence, according to Broad, when I look at a penny from the side and from where I am I can see its brown colour but only an elliptical part of its shape, the following is true of me. I am

⁶¹ E.g. Broad 1965a, 90; Crane 2000, 176; Tye 2000, 53-4.

sensorily related to an object that has the properties of brownness and being elliptical. Others have endorsed (Phen) implicitly by pointing out instances of it. Moore and Price for example, show their acceptance of the principle by how they treat specific cases of visual experience:

For it seems to me quite plain that what is meant by saying that the same surface 'looks' different to two different people is that each is 'seeing', in a sense which I have called 'directly see', an entity which really is different from what the other is seeing. ... And it also seems to me plain that, to say that, e.g. if I am wearing blue spectacles, a wall which is white but *not* bluish-white 'looks' bluish-white to me, is merely another way of saying that I am directly seeing an expanse which really is of a bluish-white colour.... (Moore 1965, 133)

When I say 'This table appears brown to me' it is quite plain that I am acquainted with an actual instance of brownness (or equally plainly with a pair of instances when I see double). This cannot indeed be proved, but it is absolutely evident and indubitable. But I am not acquainted with an actual instance of tableness, though of course it may be that there is one. Thus the natural way of restating the original sentence 'This table appears brown to me' is 'I am acquainted with something which *actually* is brown (viz. a sense-datum) and I believe that there is a table to which this something is intimately related.... (Price 1932, 63)

Moore says that when looking at a white wall through blue-tinted glasses, one directly sees something – 'an expanse' – which is in fact of a bluish colour. And Price maintains that when seeing a brown table one is acquainted with something that actually is brown. So, both Moore and Price agree with Broad that when something looks F to one then there is something that is F to which one is directly related.

Furthermore, Moore and Price talk about how their claims about what experience is like 'seem plain' to them, or even 'absolutely evident and indubitable'. This expressed confidence is based on first person inspection of experience. With the help of their examples they invite the reader to do the same and they clearly expect the result to be overwhelming confirmation. Broad, too, holds that reflection on one's own experience lends strong support to (Phen):

Now I think that it must be at least admitted that the sensum theory is highly plausible. When I look at a penny from the side I am certainly aware of *something*, and it is certainly plausible to hold that this something is elliptical in the same plain sense in which a suitably bent piece of wire, looked at from straight above, is elliptical. (Broad 1965a, 89.)

In this manner, adherents to (Phen) assume that their principle is supported by first-person reflection on experience. That is to say, (Phen) is thought to be grounded in features of what experience is like as these are revealed in introspection. Specifically, according to Robinson (1994, 45), it is 'the specially sensational or presentational element of perception' that provides the basis for (Phen). I will call this grounding feature 'the presentational feature' from now on.

In the next section, we will look at the presentational feature as the Sense Datum Theorists characterise it in some greater detail. Once we have done so, we can begin to judge whether and in what sense this alleged feature of phenomenal character does in fact ground (Phen).

(3) The presentational feature

Consider Moore's quote first. He says that when it looks as if there is a bluish-white wall before one, one directly sees before one an expanse that really is bluish-white. This, according to Moore 'seems quite plain', and, as I said above, I take it that what he means is that it is obvious from first-person inspection of experience. We need to ask then, what experience must be like in order for things to be plain in this way. With respect to this question, the crucial part of Moore's claim concerns what is contained in the relative clause, i.e. that the expanse *really is* bluish-white. When one turns to Price and Broad, one sees a similar emphasis. Price claims that when one reflects on one's experience as of a brown table, it is plain that one is acquainted with an actual instance of brownness. In such a case, he says, it seems to one as if something *actually is* brown. In his famous tomato example, Price says that one is introspectively aware of the existence of something in which the properties one is aware of are instantiated.

When I see a tomato there is much that I can doubt. ... One thing however I cannot doubt: that there exists a red patch of a round and somewhat bulgy shape ... and that this whole field of colour is presented to my consciousness. (Price 1932, 3)

This fits well with Broad's claim. When having an experience as of a penny from the side, Broad holds, it looks as if there is something before one that really has the property of being elliptical. To get at this sense in which it looks as if there is something before one, Broad's theory posits 'the actual existence of an elliptical object' (88). All three philosophers therefore agree in their characterisation of what experience is like on this issue. They hold that such characterisation must mention the presentation of *something* that *actually* or *really exists* and possesses the properties that one is aware of.

As a working hypothesis, I am going to assume that this characterisation captures the presentational feature of experience that Robinson has in mind. That is, I am going to assume that it captures the presentational feature of phenomenal character. It is clear that if the presentational feature is part of phenomenal character it is one that is supposed to be common to all experiences. S's experience as of a yellow triangle, your experience as of a red ball and my

experience as of a blue square all are thought to share it. As such, it is more like a second-order phenomenal feature – it is a feature of other phenomenal features. According to the Sense Datum Theorists, whichever features or qualities one is aware of in introspecting one's experiences they will be presented as if they are possessed by something that actually exists. Let us call this something that the Sense Datum theorists talk about 'object of experience' or 'object of one's (experiential or phenomenal) awareness'. Hence, phenomenal features are presented as being had by an actually existing object of experience. In other words, what one is presented with is presented as *actually existing*. So we now have first stab at a characterisation of the presentational feature based on the Sense Datum Theory literature:

- (P) When introspecting what experience is like, it is as if one is presented with actually existing objects and their features.

Let us set aside for a moment the issue of whether (P) is an acceptable claim about phenomenal character. I briefly want to consider how (P) might relate to (Phen). Suppose (P) is true. We want to know whether, and in which way, it might ground (Phen). On the face of it, the two are certainly not equivalent. (P), as we have just seen, is a claim about what experience is like, namely that phenomenal character involves the presentational feature. (Phen), by contrast, is a claim about the ontological ingredients of experience. It says what the nature of phenomenal character consists in, namely an acquaintance relation between the subject and a certain kind of object and its properties. One suggestion for the grounding relation might be that we can derive the latter from the former simply by taking the presentational feature at face value. The assumption would be that phenomenal character wears its metaphysics on its sleeves. One merely has to introspect what experience is like and one will become thereby aware of the ontological ingredients of experience. But one might hold that, on the one hand, this suggestion simplifies matters too much and, on the other, it puts a more severe condition on the relation between (P) and (Phen) than necessary. For, another suggestion would be to hold that the grounding relation is one between *explanans* and *explanandum*: (Phen) – the metaphysical proposal – explains (P) – what experience is like.⁶² Of course, these two proposals are not directly in competition with each other. If one is convinced that phenomenal character wears its metaphysics on its sleeve, then, of course, one will think that the proposed metaphysics best explains what such experience is like. But the point is that one does not have

⁶² Or underwrites (P). See Ch.1, sec. (4) for this qualification.

to hold that the nature of phenomenal character is immediately and exactly revealed by introspection. As long as one can make a case that one's metaphysics best explains what experience is like from first-person reflection the former may be thought of as grounded in the latter. On this less demanding view, for (P) to be regarded as grounding (Phen), the latter needs to be at least the best explanation of (P).

Let us leave this general issue about the grounding relation between (Phen) and the presentational feature in the background for now (we will come back to it in section (6)) and return to our discussion of the presentational feature itself. Specifically, we need to look in detail at our first characterisation of it, i.e. at (P). (P) is the claim that when reflecting introspectively on what experience is like, it is as if what one is presented with actually existing objects and their properties. The presentational feature, according to this characterisation of it, is apparent actual existence of the objects and properties presented in experience. We have to ask what Sense Datum Theorists might have in mind by it. As the label readily indicates, apparent actual existence concerns the apparent existential situation of what is presented to one in introspection. But in which sense exactly? It does not concern ontological status in the manner that the mind-independence feature does. Apparent actual existence of what is presented to one in experience is supposed to be compatible with all sorts of ontological positions about the presented entities. To say that presented objects look as if they actually exist is often held to be neutral on whether they are mind-dependent or mind-independent, or whether they are abstract, mental or physical (see, e.g. Broad 1965b; Crane 2000). Perhaps, then, it concerns the modal status of the presented properties and objects. According to this suggestion, when one asserts that upon reflecting on one's experience it looks as if there are actually existing objects and their properties before one, one is making a claim about how things appear modally to one.

The natural reaction at this point is to wonder what it means to say that things appear as actually existing in a modal sense. And, it quickly transpires that (P) cannot be meant as a claim about the appearance of modal status in any serious sense. On the one hand, if it were, it would not be of much interest from the point of view of accounting for the nature of experience. The two important modal concepts are possibility and necessity. A state of affairs being actual is compatible with it being necessary or merely possible. So suppose that appearances did involve actuality in this modal sense. Nothing much would follow from it, other than that it does not look as if what is presented to one is impossible. On the other hand,

on this interpretation, (P) would be false: one can have an experience as of an impossible object; perhaps not exactly round squares, but things involving perspectival impossibility, as depicted in certain Escher paintings, for instance. (Some fun examples can be found in Bruno Ernst's aptly titled book, 'Adventures with Impossible Objects' (Ernst 1986)).

Therefore the adverbs 'actually' and 'really' (or adjectives, when used in noun phrases) are best thought of as not contributing anything crucial to the characterisation of how things appear. If they did, one would have to acknowledge a three-fold distinction between actual, or real, existence and non-actual, or unreal, existence and non-existence. What kinds of things might fall under each category? We quickly get into very complicated metaphysical territory. However, for it to be relevant to (P), this is a distinction that would have to be revealed, at least partially so, in introspection of visual phenomenology. But it is not very credible that the phenomenal character of visual experience contains such sophisticated metaphysical theory.⁶³

In view of these considerations, it is highly unlikely that proponents of (P) have in mind the appearance of modal status when they say that it looks as if some property instance or something having properties actually exists. It is much more plausible that when Sense Datum Theory proponents of (P) are talking of the apparent actual existence or real existence of what is presented to one, they simply mean to say with gusto that it is as if these presented entities exist. In other words, they mean to point out that it is as if these presented entities exist and they want to do so emphatically: 'Look, it is as if they actually do exist!' So, this leaves us with a cleaned-up interpretation of (P): it says that first-person reflection on one's experience reveals that it is as if the presented objects and their properties exist. There is some emphasis added in terms of 'actually' and 'really' but nothing more.

⁶³ For one thing, there are many and very different views of modality (and I am not aware of any appeal to visual phenomenology in defending a particular view). But to give a specific example: Lewis (1986) holds that modal space is constituted by possible worlds. Possible worlds are spatio-temporally distinct, parallel universes; they and their inhabitants have existence in a firm and robust sense of existence. One of these possible worlds is our world. The way in which this world is singled out from among all other possible worlds is in indexical fashion (i.e. it is *this* world from our point of view); on Lewis' account, the term 'actual' is used solely to perform this indexical function. Something actually existing is something that exists in our world on this view. Non-actually existing things are those that are part of a possible world distinct from the actual world. Surely, it is implausible to hold that such a sophisticated theory is reflected in visual phenomenology. Moreover, on Lewis' account, to be an actually existing object is to be part of the spatio-temporal physical framework of the actual world. This means that non-physical abstract objects and mental objects are, if they exist, not actually existing but non-actually existing. So to say that something looks as if it actually exists would be to say that it looks as if it is part of the physical world around one. But it does not make sense to suppose that Sense Datum theorists, who hold that in experience one is aware of a special object - a mental, or non-mental, *non-physical* object - should draw attention to something like physical existence in support of their view.

Is (P), so understood, acceptable? One might think that this question is easy to answer: simply introspect what your experience is like and you should be able to tell straightaway whether or not (P) is true. It seems proponents of (P) would find this to be an entirely appropriate and convincing way - and perhaps the only way - of establishing (P). Recall Moore's and Price's insistence that the phenomenal principle is 'quite plain' and 'indubitable' from inspection of one's experience. Price admits that there cannot be a proof in terms of a valid argument with premises and conclusion, but he is satisfied that such is not needed in this case: 'appeal to every man's own consciousness' is thought to be sufficiently persuasive (Price 1932, 6).

However, this peculiar way of establishing (P) makes it very difficult to deliberate its truth. This difficulty is, of course, a recurrent theme in this thesis. Each of us only has reflection on their own experience to go on and testimonial evidence from other people's reflection on their experience. Such a method is perhaps not so bad when all agree, but very inconvenient when they do not. A sensible way to proceed is therefore to ask whether there is general agreement concerning the presentational feature in the literature. We have already seen above that representatives from the Sense Datum tradition hold that a characterisation of phenomenal character crucially involves (P). Moore, Price, Broad and Robinson all point to the alleged phenomenal fact that in experience one is aware of actually existing instances of properties. Does agreement go further than the confines of Sense Datum Theory? The answer is complicated. As we shall see, there is no direct agreement on (P). Still, even if (P) is unacceptable, there is still a more general question about the presentational feature. Perhaps there is some other characterisation of this feature that finds acceptance on a wider scale. That is to say, one might hold that the presentational feature is part of phenomenal character, but under a different characterisation than the one I proposed can be found in some of the Sense Datum Theory literature. If so, maybe this other characterisation would be sufficient to ground (Phen).

I will argue in the next two sections that there is a sense in which there is agreement on the presentational feature. First, I will show that Intentionalists hold that experience has presentational character. On the basis of what they say, I will offer a characterisation of the presentational feature different from (P). Then I will argue that there is significant agreement on the matter between Sense Datum Theorists and Intentionalists. This requires giving up on certain elements contained in (P). In the last section I will investigate whether the

presentational feature so understood can provide sufficient grounding for the Phenomenal Principle.

(4) The there-ness feature

So let us now change tack slightly and look for endorsement of the presentational feature outside the Sense Datum Theory literature. Or, perhaps more carefully, I want to look at what strikes me as an area of agreement concerning visual phenomenology among more contemporary philosophers. This agreement, once its object is adequately specified, amounts to widespread endorsement of a feature of phenomenal character that deserves to be called the presentational feature.

Searle (1983) draws attention to the following feature of what experience is like:

If, for example, I see a yellow station wagon in front of me, the experience I have is directly of the object. It doesn't just 'represent' the object, it provides direct access to it. The experience has a kind of directness, immediacy and involuntariness which is not shared by a belief which I might have about the object in its absence. ...[B]ecause of the special features of perceptual experiences I propose to call them 'presentations'.... (45-6)

Searle notes that the character of experience involves the apparent direct or immediate access to what is presented to one. He holds that this feature is special to the phenomenology of experience; the character of belief and other representational mental phenomena does not involve this putative directness or immediacy.⁶⁴ This thought – that the character of experience is immediate – is widely shared among proponents of very different views of experience. Philosophers express the thought in slightly different, but relevantly similar ways. Sturgeon (2000), for example, points to a feature of phenomenal character he calls 'Scene-Immediacy':

[Y]our visual experience will place a moving rock before the mind in a uniquely vivid way. Its phenomenology will be as if a scene is made manifest to you. This is the most striking aspect of visual consciousness. It's the signal feature of visual phenomenology. And there's nothing ineffable about it. Such phenomenology involves a uniquely vivid directedness upon the world. Visual phenomenology makes it for a subject as if a scene is simply presented. Veridical perception, illusion and hallucination seem to place objects and their features directly before the mind. (Sturgeon 2000, 9)

⁶⁴It is argued by Martin 2002b, though, that visual imagination also involves the apparent presence of objects and their properties. However, he points out that it is apparent presence in imaginary space. So one might say therefore that the character of experience still involves a unique appearance of presence, as long as this is understood to be presence in experiential space and not imaginary space.

According to Sturgeon, what experience is like involves the placement of something 'before the mind in a uniquely vivid way'. The objects and properties one is aware of are 'simply presented' and this means that they are placed 'directly before the mind'. This is Sturgeon's way of expressing the idea that the phenomenal character of experience involves the apparent direct access to the object of experience that Searle is talking about. He also asserts that this element is special to experience. Both philosophers therefore agree that phenomenal character of experience typically and distinctively involves the *apparent presence* of an object and its properties. Experience, according to them, has a presentational character. This agreement is not confined to one sort of account of visual experience. We have just seen an instance of such agreement between Searle, who holds an Intentionalist view and Sturgeon, who holds a combination of Sense Datum Theory and Intentionalism (the 'Intentional Trope Theory'). Martin (2002b), a Naïve Realist, proposes that it is reasonable to claim 'that sensory states involve a certain immediacy or apparent presence of an object which is simply not required in cases of pure thought' (387-8). All in all, there is agreement among philosophers of perception in general that visual experience has presentational character.⁶⁵

The assertions about the presentational character of experience we have just reviewed are not very strong. All of the philosophers above point out that experience is presentational. They say, in other words, that introspecting what experience is like reveals that it is as if objects and their properties are right there in front of one. Now, of course most of them combine claims about the presentational character with a lot of other claims about what experience is like, for example about what sorts of objects or what sorts of properties appear to be before the mind. I am ignoring any of these further claims, focussing just on their claims about presentational character. When one has an experience as of a green plant, it is, say these philosophers, as if the green plant is directly before one. This is then usually contrasted with beliefs; beliefs are not presentational because when one has a belief about a green plant, it is not thereby that it is for one as if there is a green plant immediately before one. Sometimes this is expressed, as Searle does above, in terms of beliefs being able to be had in the absence of their objects. One needs to be clear at this point. Absence does not entail inexistence in this case (nor in any other) without further premises. Absence is the opposite of presence. The contrast with respect to beliefs and experience is this. Suppose I have a belief about the Eiffel Tower while I am in London. My belief might be true and, moreover, nothing in virtue of what having the

⁶⁵ Belief-analyses of perception are perhaps an exception. At least, these theories do not seem to have the resources to accommodate the presentational character of experience. See, e.g. Armstrong 1968.

belief is like makes it appear to me as if the Eiffel Tower is present to me right there where I am in London. Now suppose that I have an experience as of the Eiffel Tower while I am in London. In having such an experience, it will look to me as if the Eiffel Tower is present to me right there in London. My experience is not a veridical perception, of course (the Eiffel Tower is, after all, in Paris), but a delusory experience of some sort, involving either an misperception of something else as the Eiffel Tower, or a full-blown hallucination.

To say that experience is presentational, or that it has presentational character, is then to say that experience displays its objects as if they are in the presence of the subject of experience. It is as if the objects of experience are right there before one. On this view, what experience is like involves the apparent presence or apparent *there-ness* of the objects of experience and their properties.

To say that something is there before one, or present in visual experience might be held to introduce an aspect of the spatial character of the experience. Concentrating on visual experience, as I do in this thesis, it would not be an unreasonable conjecture. But on this occasion, I think it is instructive briefly to consider sensory experience in other modalities. Auditory, gustatory and olfactory experiences do not have a spatial character like visual experience has. If they do have a spatial character at all, it is much more minimal or rudimentary in kind. However, these kinds of experiences, too, might be thought to display their objects as if they are present to one. So, for example, when one smells a sweet scent it is as if this scent (or maybe even the source of the scent) is present to one's senses. Similarly, when one hears a score of music, it is as if the sounds (or, again, maybe their sources) are there, around one and present to one's hearing.⁶⁶

Both issues, what kind of spatial character, if any, is had by sensory experiences other than visual experience and whether such experiences display their objects as if they are present to one are complicated and I do not want to pursue them here. So let me say something maximally non-committal but suggestive. If one holds that the character of other sensory experiences also involves the presentational feature and if one holds that other sensory experiences do not have sufficiently similar spatial character, then one could perhaps suppose

⁶⁶ Most Sense Datum Theorists hold that (P) is a feature of all kinds of sensory experience. If the presentational feature of experience just set out is also applicable to experience in other sense modalities, this would strengthen my case for making out a common ground between the Sense Datum Theorists and other philosophers on this score.

that the presentational feature is some primitive indexicality that the characters of these experiences all possess. At any rate, since we are concerned only with visual experience here, it is sufficient to think of the there-ness or presence of objects in experience as a kind of spatial presence. That is to say, we may think of the sense in which it is as if objects are there, before one, as their being apparently right in the space before one. I will use the phrases 'apparent there-ness' or 'there-ness feature' to talk about the feature of phenomenal character that is responsible for experience having a presentational character in the sense just set out.

(5) There-ness and (P)

From the point of view of Sense Datum Theorists, recognition of (P) shows that an Intentionalist view is phenomenally inadequate and thus implausible. According to them, the introspective evidence shows that properties are experienced as really instantiated and that objects appearing to have these properties are experienced as actually existing. They then point out that Intentionalism says that phenomenal character is fully accounted for by appeal to representational properties alone. Yet, says the Sense Datum Theorist, how can a state that merely represents objects and their properties make it the case that in having that state it is as if these objects and properties really exist? It does not seem possible to account for (P) in terms of representational properties alone. Indeed, one kind of response to this challenge is to reject Intentionalism in its pure form and endorse special non-representational properties that experiential states have in addition to representational properties (e.g. Peacocke (1983)). These are views that hold that there are mental paint properties. Intentionalism paired off in this way with the Mental Paint View is a concession to the challenge by the Sense Datum Theory and it is compatible with (P). For, to account for phenomenal character, the mixed view posits properties that in fact exist and of which one is aware in introspection.⁶⁷

As we have just seen in the previous section, Intentionalists generally accept that phenomenal character involves the there-ness feature. They insist that Intentionalism does not have to be abandoned in recognition of this phenomenal feature. Rather, such philosophers hold that their view can perfectly well accommodate the introspective evidence captured by the there-ness feature. There are a number of proposals to deal with the there-ness feature that do not involve abandoning pure Intentionalism. They all hold that experience is a special kind of mental representation. While they hold that many or all mental phenomena are representations

⁶⁷ Although it depends a little how much one wants to make of the distinction between apparently existing properties and apparently existing objects having the presented properties.

(i.e. have intentional content) they might say that there is a distinct kind of representation that applies only to experience. By appeal to a special kind of representation, the thought is, one can explain on the one hand how experience is different from other representational mental states such as belief and desire. Furthermore, a special kind of representation allows one to account for the distinctive phenomenology of experience, in particular, for the there-ness feature.

We need to appeal to the idea that there is something special or distinctive to the case of sensory experience which contrasts with other cases of intentional states: that experience involves a particular way in which objects are presented as being so. ... [F]or the subject it is as if the objects are right before him. The intentional theorist seeks to explain this aspect of experience by reference to the kind of state of mind experiencing is. (Martin 2002b, 388 & 399)

There are different ways to spell out the idea that experience is a special kind of representation. One popular suggestion is to say that experience has non-conceptual content. The idea is that in order to have an experience with a given content *p*, one does not have to possess the concepts which essentially characterise *p*. In other words, one does not have to possess the concepts which one would have to possess if one were to have a conceptual state that *p*. (Crane 2001, 152. See also Crane 1992; Evans 1982, ch.5; Peacocke 1992, ch.3; Martin 1994) One might further hold that such non-conceptual content is coded in a specific 'analogue' way (e.g. Dretske 1981, ch.6; Peacocke 1986). Among others, both these ideas are used to explain not only that experience differs from beliefs and other representational states, but also how it differs. Specifically, the ideas are used to explain that experiential content is *replete*, i.e. that its content is much richer and fuller in detail than for instance the content of beliefs is. There-ness may then be thought to be a phenomenological upshot of the state's having non-conceptual and/or analogue content.

Another suggestion is based on the thought that there is a rational link between the phenomenology of experience and its functional role in our mental economy. As noted by Austin (1962, 113) a subject's perceptual beliefs have the role of fixing her beliefs about her environment, unless there is countervailing evidence. Moreover, experience is an important source of justification for our perceptual beliefs. According to the proposal at hand, bound up with these functional and normative aspects of experience is a phenomenological fact, namely that one seems to be directly presented with objects and their properties in experience. The there-ness feature is thus part of an explanation of how experience comes to be a reason from the first-person perspective and hence of how experience has the functional role it does.

Specifically, the there-ness feature is thought to be the ‘phenomenological echo’ of the fact that one is having a state that has such a functional role. “The fact that one is having a perceptual experience with a certain content is manifested to a subject through his awareness of the seeming presence of the objects of experience.” (Martin 2002b, 391)⁶⁸

It seems that the Intentionalist can offer an account of the there-ness feature in terms of special aspects of the experiential representation. As we have seen, these may be a kind of content, or kind of coding of the content, or even a kind of functional role of the state in question. Each proposal contains the suggestion that the phenomenological character of the experience, in particular the putative presence of objects and their properties, is a phenomenological upshot or reflection of the relevant special aspect of the experience.

This raises the question of how the there-ness feature compares to (P). Do they capture the same presentational aspect of experience? Do they capture distinct, related, or perhaps similar aspects of experience? On the one hand, in the beginning of this section we saw that there seems to be a great contrast. The claim that the character of experience involves apparent there-ness is in important ways metaphysically less charged than the one put forward by the Sense Datum Theorists’ assertion of (P). (P) is the claim that phenomenal character involves the appearance of existence of what one is aware of. To say that the character of experience involves the there-ness feature is the claim that phenomenal character comprehends the appearance of (spatial) presence of what one is aware of. One lesson from the last chapter was that the spatial character of experience does not bring with it any appearance of ontological status. Similarly, the there-ness feature does not encompass the appearance of existence of what is so presented.

But although there is a significant contrast between (P) and the there-ness feature, there is also an equally significant convergence among the two. The convergence becomes evident when one considers that by (P) Sense Datum Theorists cannot have in mind the appearance of *mere* existence of the objects and properties of experience. Such a condition would be fulfilled if it appeared to one as if something existed in some place other than where one is currently positioned and undergoing the experience. But of course, the appearance of existence in some place or other does not get at what Sense Datum Theorists patently are after in putting forward

⁶⁸ I do wonder, though, how aspects of the phenomenology can both allow states to have the functional role that they have and be the (phenomenological) echo or reflection of that functional role.

(P). It is existence in *this* place, where one is having the experience that matters. Minimally, then, (P) must be supposed to capture not only the apparent existence, but also the apparent presence of the objects of experiential awareness.

But now one might fairly ask, concerning the putative appearance of existence, what it might be over and above than what is involved in the apparent presence of the objects of experience. By the end of section (3), I concluded that a reasonable interpretation of Sense Datum Theorists' claim (P) has to employ the notion of existence *simpliciter*, and not some more fancy notion, such as actual (in the modal sense of actual) existence, which involves sophisticated metaphysical theory. Moreover, we saw in chapter 3 that it is highly questionable to consider features concerning ontological status, i.e. mind-independence and mind-dependence part of visual phenomenology. And, finally, the notion of existence involved in (P) cannot be taken to be physical existence either. (P) is supposed to provide support for special objects as postulated by Sense Datum Theory, and on most versions of this view these are not physical entities. (See also footnote 63 on this point.) In the end, it seems as if such a neutral and theoretically simple notion of apparent existence is empty. To say that phenomenal character involves the apparent existence of objects in this sense does not add anything to the claim of their putative presence in experience.

In sum, we may think of (P) as dividing into two components: the there-ness feature and apparent existence. The first is shared by the Intentionalist characterisation of the presentational feature. The second is not shared by it. It is difficult to give any substance to this idea of apparent existence – apart from what is contained in apparent there-ness – which would not immediately render it highly implausible as a feature of phenomenal character. In the end, the second component of (P) – apparent existence – seems vacuous.

(6) There-ness and the Phenomenal Principle

I now want to return to the question touched upon in section (3), about whether and in which way the presentational feature may be thought to ground the Phenomenal Principle. After our discussion of (P) and the there-ness feature it has become clear that the there-ness feature is the more plausible candidate for the presentational feature. Two reasons support this verdict. Firstly, there is extensive agreement among philosophers that the there-ness feature is part of the phenomenology of visual experience. Importantly, this agreement includes those that favour (P), since the there-ness feature is a component of (P). Secondly, our investigation made

it clear that the other component in (P), i.e. apparent existence is problematic. Either the idea of apparent existence is vacuous, or it is extremely obscure and implausible.

The question before us, then, is in what sense if any, the there-ness feature grounds (Phen). It is clear that they are not equivalent. They are not even the same kind of claim; one is a claim about what experience is like, the other a principle about how what experience is like is best underwritten. The there-ness claim says that when one introspectively reflects on experience it is as if objects and their features are present to one. (Phen) says that if, on introspective reflection, it looks to a subject as if there is an F before her, then there actually exists something that has F and that the subject is aware of. So the next question is whether the latter is the best explanation of the former. In other words, is the phenomenal fact that it looks as if the objects and their features are present to one best explained by the fact that there actually exist these objects and their features and the subject of experience is aware of them?

This, I want to propose, is not at all evident. To see why, consider Crane's take on the presentational aspect of experience. He holds that most philosophers agree on the following claim about visual phenomenology: 'in experience, something is given to the experiencer' (Crane 2000, 189). Indeed, on his view, this is precisely what the early Sense Datum Theorists, such as Moore and Price, were eager to point out.

Price's point is essentially the same as Moore's: that perception presents us with something, something is *given* to us – this something is the given. (Crane 2000, 176)

Crane thinks that this claim comes to the same as saying that perceptual experience is relational, that 'experience relates us to something which is given to us' and that this is obvious on the basis of phenomenology. However, according to Sense Datum Theory this grounds (Phen). Defenders of Sense Datum Theory hold that the relation is an acquaintance relation and then focus on supplying a suitable object that can serve as the relatum in this relation. Crane proposes a different account. He suggests that the phenomenological observation of something being given or being presented in experience is best understood to ground an Intentionalist view. For, he points out, Intentionalism regards experiential states as at least apparently relational.

[A]n intentional state is one in which the mind is directed on an object, one which presents an object, or one which has a content or a subject matter. As these phrases suggest, intentional states seem to be relational. Of course, many theories of intentionality end up denying that

intentional states are genuine relations – some call them ‘quasi-relational’ – but the point is rather that these states give the appearance of presenting something, even if (as in the case of hallucination) there is nothing to be presented. So a theory which treats perceptual experiences as intentional states understands the given in a particular way: what is given is an intentional object. (Crane 2000, 189-90)

We therefore have here the suggestion that the presentational aspect of experience grounds a principle different from (Phen). This principle says that if it looks to one as if there is an F before one, then one is in an intentional state of a certain kind, namely one that represents to one that there is an F before one. In the previous section, we have seen different proposals for Intentionalist accounts of experience that might be up to the task of specifying such an intentional state. I am not interested in discussing the merits or defects of these proposals. What is important for my purposes is the general principle recommending that some Intentionalist account or other is true. It represents a genuine rival to (Phen).

This is evident only against the background of the distinction between (P) and the there-ness feature. Specifically, we have seen that the there-ness feature is more plausible as a characterisation of the presentational aspect of phenomenal character. If (P) were still under consideration, then arguably (Phen) would be a better explanation than the Intentionalist principle. On a critical note, it does seem to me that Crane’s interpretation of what the Sense Datum Theorists claim about phenomenal character ignores the existential component that amounts to the difference between (P) and the there-ness feature. Although I have argued that in the end, there-ness is all to which the Sense Datum Theorist could plausibly avail herself, this needs to be shown and I have tried to do so. Without discussing the relation between (P) and the there-ness feature, such an assertion might be held to do injustice to Sense Datum Theorists by not engaging with a crucial detail of their view.

But the there-ness feature may plausibly be held to give equal support to both of the two principles. There-ness considered on its own does not suffice to decide which type of explanation is better. Compare G.A. Paul’s careful expression of doubt about Sense Datum Theory:

I do wish to deny that there is any sense in which this [Sense Datum] terminology is nearer to reality than any other which may be used to express the same facts; in particular, I wish to deny that in order to give a complete and accurate account of any perceptual situation it is necessary to use a noun in the way in which ‘sense-datum’ is used,... (Paul 1965, 279)

With respect to the there-ness feature, Paul is right to say that Sense Datum Theory does not fare better than other theories, such as Intentionalism. However, this point holds the other way around, too: Intentionalism does not fare any better than Sense Datum Theory. The there-ness feature just says that it looks as if objects and their features are presented to one. This is completely neutral with respect to the two suggestions whether it is an acquaintance with certain entities or instantiating specific kinds of representational properties. Help with the decision cannot be found by peering inwardly on one's experience. Considered on its own, the presentational feature of phenomenal character favours neither of the principles more than the other.

But then one may reasonably go one step further. If the presentational feature gives equal support to these rather different principles, then one might ask in what sense it gives support to them at all. The presentational feature is neutral with respect to principles concerning the metaphysics of experience. It is neutral, in other words, with respect to theory. So it does not make much sense to think of this feature as being able to *ground* any of them. This shows that the presentational feature of phenomenal character cannot play a role in constructing an account of the nature of visual experience. Talk in terms of these principles which are allegedly grounded in what experience is like, hides this fact. Their proponents use them to give expression to the presentational feature highly suggestive of their preferred theory. As in the previous two chapters, I hold that this is a case of philosophers appropriating phenomenology for their theoretical purposes.

Chapter 5

Introspective Evidence

(1) Introduction

The focus of this chapter is the Standard Method itself, *qua* methodology for constructing a theory of the nature of visual experience. The Standard Method comes in two steps. One step is to acquire introspective evidence about the phenomenal character of experience. The other step is to use this evidence to determine a metaphysics of such experience. In short, the Standard Method uses introspective evidence to construct a metaphysics of visual experience. I argue that this methodology is seriously flawed.

In section (2) I provide a brief reminder of the Standard Method itself and its motivations. A crucial assumption made by users of the Standard Method is that we have appropriate introspective access to the phenomenology of our experiences. I show in section (3) that there is an important limitation on what sort of introspection-based look-ascriptions may serve as introspective evidence in constraining a metaphysics of experience. Then I argue in section (4) that our access to the right sort of introspective evidence is extremely problematic. This belies the crucial assumption about appropriate introspective access to visual phenomenology made by users of the Standard Method. I argue further that this means that the Standard Method cannot be used legitimately. Much influential work on visual experience has employed this methodology, however. If I am right, then such work is methodologically unsound.

(2) Phenomenal Adequacy and the Standard Method

Let me briefly recap the Standard Method and its motivation. I am going to give only a telescoped account of these matters in this section, but I have already set them out in great detail in chapter 1, sections (4) and (5).

Philosophers of perception are united in accepting that an adequate account of experience must be true to its phenomenology, that it must ‘do justice to the phenomenology’. This is the ‘Phenomenal Adequacy’ requirement:

(PA) A metaphysics of visual experience must be true to visual phenomenology.

An adequate reading of (PA) interprets it to be a requirement to the effect that a metaphysics of experience must *underwrite* its phenomenology. The idea is that (PA) must provide a philosophically illuminating grip on phenomenal character.

In their endeavour to give an account of how visual phenomenology is best underwritten, philosophers make claims about what experience is like. They assume that our primary grip on what experience is like comes through introspection. This is the 'Introspective Access' assumption:

(IA) Our primary grip on phenomenal character comes through introspection.

Since the deliverance of introspection – belief about what experience is like – is articulated in look-ascriptions and the latter are thus held to capture introspection-based beliefs about the phenomenal character of experience.

Together (PA) and (IA) fuel a methodology standardly used by philosophers to investigate conscious visual experience – the Standard Method. In combination, (PA) and (IA) say that an account of experience must underwrite introspective look-ascriptions. Philosophers then assume that there is a range of data concerning visual phenomenology that any good account of experience must underwrite. This data, they hold, is accessed by introspection: in introspecting what experience is like, we form introspective beliefs about phenomenal experience. The latter are thought to provide one with the data in question or *introspective evidence*. For they are assumed to be formed directly on the basis of what experience is like, i.e. on the basis of the phenomenology of the experience itself. In view of this, introspective evidence is held to be uncontaminated by theory.

Since introspective beliefs about phenomenal character are articulated in look-ascriptions, these ascriptions are thought to articulate introspective evidence. Philosophers hold that the features mentioned in them are essentially tied to phenomenal character (i.e. they are *phenomenal features*). A phenomenal feature satisfies two conditions: it individuates or identifies properties of the experience and is itself introspectively arrived at on the basis of what experience is like. Now we can state the core thought of the Standard Method: a good account of experience has to underwrite the phenomenal features mentioned in introspective look-ascriptions.

To give you an example of how this works, consider the following look-ascription:

(L) It looks to me as if there is a blue pen before me.

(L) mentions blueness in its content-clause. The Standard Method says that blueness is a phenomenal feature and that one's metaphysics of experience should underwrite it. The different views of the nature of experience do so in different ways. Sense Datum Theory says that experience is an acquaintance relation between a subject and a special sensory object. According to defenders of this view, the phenomenal feature blueness mentioned in (L) is underwritten by a property possessed by the special sensory object with which one is acquainted in having the experience as of a blue pen. A different proposal is put forward by Intentionalism, which says that experience is a representation. Proponents of this view would say the phenomenal feature of blueness is underwritten by an intentional property and that this intentional property is itself individuated by reference to the property blue in the world. The Mental Paint View says that experience is at least partly built from mental paint properties. Defenders of this view hold that the phenomenal feature blueness mentioned by (L) is underwritten by a certain colour-like 'blue-ish' mental paint property of the experience. Last but not least, Naïve Realism says that (veridical) experience is acquaintance between a subject and public objects in the world. According to proponents of this view, if (L) reports a veridical experience, the phenomenal feature blueness mentioned in it is underwritten by the subject's acquaintance with the actual colour of the seen pen.

So we can see that the Standard Method uses introspectively available features – introspective evidence – to help construct a metaphysics of experience. It uses one's introspective grip on what experience is like in order to identify properties in terms of which one can best underwrite visual phenomenology. In this way, the Standard Method employs introspective evidence to motivate and ground substantial metaphysical conclusions. Introspective evidence is held to provide a starting point for one's view of the underlying nature of experience.

In chapter 1, I quoted remarks by Price, Levine, Tye and Martin to show that the Standard Method is shared by proponents of differing views of visual experience and that it spreads through much work in this area. Let me repeat some of the highlights from these quotes here:

The term [sense datum] is meant to stand for something whose existence is indubitable (however fleeting), something from which all theories of perception ought to start, however much they may diverge later. (Price 1932, 19)⁶⁹

I maintain, however, that conscious experiences themselves, not merely our verbal judgements about them, are the primary data to which a theory must answer. Of course this means taking the first-person point of view seriously...as a legitimate source of data. (Levine 2001, 134)

[T]he phenomenal character of such experiences – itself something that is introspectibly accessible, assuming the appropriate concepts are possessed and there is no cognitive malfunction – is identical with, or contained within, their intentional contents. (Tye 1995, 136)

[Naïve Realism] is put forward on the grounds that it gives an accurate description of how the subject's situation strikes her when consciously perceiving. (Martin 1997, 84)

Importantly, users of the Standard Method hold that it provides one's metaphysics of experience with a certain justification or authority. Their understanding of (PA) plays a large role in this assumption. For the reasons set out above, a metaphysics that is arrived at via the Standard Method is considered to be phenomenally adequate. A phenomenally adequate view of the nature of experience is thought to have a significant advantage over rivals. Those rival views are charged with endorsing a mismatch between how things strike us when we introspect experience and what they, the rival views say experience is really like. This kind of mismatch forces the rival view into a form of error theory about phenomenal character. However, a proponent of the Standard Method will point out, the more error attributed, the less phenomenally adequate and hence less plausible a metaphysics of experience becomes. But phenomenal adequacy, as we have seen, is a *requirement* on an acceptable view of the nature of experience. Hence, to say that a view 'flies in the face of phenomenology' (Shoemaker 1996b, 250) is serious criticism, indeed. The flip-side of this is that a metaphysics that *is* conservative with respect to what experience is like (i.e. that is phenomenally adequate) is held to obtain significant justification by that very fact. And the Standard Method is widely held as the best way to ensure such justification.

In the rest of this chapter I make trouble for the Standard Method. I will show that, to the extent that the Standard Method is involved, all the cited work, and all work like it, is methodologically unsound. As a first step, I expose an important limitation on use of the Standard Method in the next section.

⁶⁹ Price does not talk about introspecting experience, but it is clear that he has in mind first-person reflection on one's experience. He says, e.g., that ultimately acknowledgement of sense data depends on 'appeal to every man's own consciousness'. (6)

(3) Introspective evidence

Consider our practice of describing how things look. Embedded within it is a distinction between two kinds of features mentioned. Reflection on the distinction exposes strict limits on the use of the Standard Method.

Here are three ordinary cases in which look-ascriptions figure.

Case 1: A normally sighted subject S is in a billiard hall gazing at one of the tables. Just one red ball is left on the green surface. We ask S how things look and she says:

(L1) It looks as if there is something red and round on a green surface before me.

Case 2: S is learning mathematics and her teacher has just explained an arithmetical operation. S now understands why the solution to her problem is, say, minus two. We ask how things look to her and she says:

(L2) It looks as if the solution must be minus two.

Case 3: S is in the vegetable aisle of a grocery store, the day after reading a book on vitamins and nutrition. She stands in front of the carrots. We ask her how things look. She says:

(L3) It looks as if there is something orange and healthy before me.

These look-ascriptions are all useful and appropriate in their respective situations, but they differ significantly. This becomes evident when we ask the following question of each look-ascription: what does its content-clause – i.e. the ‘as-if’-clause – have to do with the phenomenal character of S’s visual experience?

In case 1 the intuitive answer is: everything. The content-clause expresses the phenomenal character – or at least part of the phenomenal character – of S’s visual experience. S’s visual experience is *as of* something red and round on a green surface. The look-ascription simply characterises the phenomenal character of S’s visual experience, and this is so because all parts of its content answer directly to the phenomenal character itself.

In case 2 the intuitive answer is equally plain: nothing. The content-clause of (L2) has nothing to do with the phenomenal character of S’s visual experience in the case. If S has her eyes

open, she will have a visual experience as of something; but none of its content will include the content of the 'look' in question. The look-ascription in case 2 is non-perceptual, no part of its content answers to the phenomenal character of the relevant experience. Instead, the look-ascription marks what we may call an 'understanding'. Looking in this sense is a state of cognitive clarity as opposed to ignorance or confusion.

What about case 3 – what does the content-clause of (L3) have to do with the phenomenal character of S's visual experience in that case? Here, the intuitive answer is: neither everything nor nothing. Let us begin with the not-nothing part of the verdict. S will be visually presented with orange things; she will have an experience as of something orange. It is for this reason that the content-clause of (L3) has something to do with the phenomenal character of S's experience. But not everything: awareness of the *healthiness* of what is before her depends on background beliefs and inferences taken from them. For instance, it depends on S's beliefs that carrots contain large amounts of vitamin B, her belief that vitamin B is good for one's health, and so forth. If S had not read a book on vitamins and nutrition, and if she did not know about the nutritional content of carrots, it would not have looked to her as it did, namely as if there was something healthy before her. But it would still have looked to her as if there was something orange before her. Hence, part of (L3)'s content-clause does, and part of it does not, answer directly to the phenomenal character of S's experience in the case.

Only a part of (L3)'s content-clause is therefore directly responsive to the phenomenal character of S's experience. This means that the content expressed by that clause contains features other than phenomenal features, i.e. features other than those that answer directly to phenomenal character. These non-phenomenal features are not arrived at on the basis of what experience is like. Instead, they come from background belief. For this reason, they need not individuate phenomenal character. This is in fact the case in (L3); its content is enriched to contain more than strictly visual information – healthiness being the non-phenomenal feature in question. I call such features *embellishment features*. A look-ascription involving embellishment features answers in part to the cognitive context of its target visual experience. Such a context includes the background beliefs and other commitments of the introspecting subject.

The key point is that a look-ascription mentioning embellishment features does more than express the phenomenal character of visual experience. It reflects the cognitive context of the subject of experience. So we can divide look-ascriptions into two kinds: *strict look-ascriptions* and

broad look-ascriptions. When all of the content-clause of a look-ascription is directly responsive to the phenomenal character of its target experience, it is a strict look-ascription. A strict look-ascription mentions only phenomenal features. When some of the content-clause of a look-ascription is not directly responsive to the phenomenal character of its target experience, it is a broad look-ascription. Such an ascription mentions embellishment features in its content-clause as well as phenomenal ones.⁷⁰

The distinction between strict and broad look-ascriptions has important implications. Our grip on phenomenal character comes via introspective reflection on experience. But some features mentioned in the output of introspection may *not* be phenomenal features; they may be embellishments. Embellished ascriptions are not grounded solely in phenomenal character, they are grounded at least in part in cognitive context. A theorist who misses this will incorrectly suppose herself to have read off such features from phenomenal character alone. But this would be wrong. At best she will merely happen to correctly describe phenomenology, at worst she will misdescribe it.

This impacts considerably on the role introspection can play in theory construction. An appeal to introspective evidence is an appeal to look-ascriptions. But there are at least two kinds of them: broad and strict. The former should not constrain a metaphysics of experience. For embellishment features are based on background theory rather than on what experience is like. They are not based directly on phenomenology. So, the conclusion we must draw from this is that the Standard Method should only use strict look-ascriptions. In the next section, I show that we are incapable of respecting this constraint and that this inability makes use of the Standard Method unsound.⁷¹

⁷⁰ I am setting aside look-ascriptions of the case 2-type.

⁷¹ My distinction between broad and strict look-ascriptions is not the same as the distinction between different senses of 'appears' made by Chisholm 1957, Chs. 4 and 5. Nor is it the same as the distinction between uses of 'looks' made by Jackson 1977, Ch. 3. In particular: strict look-ascription does not correspond to Chisholm's non-comparative sense of 'appears'; and it does not correspond to Jackson's phenomenal use of 'looks'. For Chisholm, the main distinguishing mark of the non-comparative sense of 'appears' is that a subject cannot be in error about whether she is appeared to in this way. For Jackson, phenomenal use of 'looks' is distinguished by a certain class of terms that figure in it (namely terms for colour, shape and distance). None of these commitments are part of my view. I hold that strict look-ascriptions are those ascriptions which answer directly to the subject's visual phenomenology.

(4) Intuition and misuse of the Standard Method

When setting out the Standard Method in chapter 1, I briefly mentioned a puzzling fact about debate on visual experience: philosophers put forward conflicting accounts of what experience is like on the basis of introspection (see footnote 22). In this section, I set out this puzzling fact in more detail and then provide an explanation of it. My explanation entails that philosophers of all stripes employ embellished look-ascriptions in their use of the Standard Method.

So what *do* philosophers say, on the basis of introspection, about the phenomenal character of visual experience? Consider a typical Sense Datum Theorist's take on what experience is like:

When I say 'This table appears brown to me' it is quite plain that I am acquainted with an actual instance of brownness (or equally plainly with a pair of instances when I see double). This cannot indeed be proved, but it is absolutely evident and indubitable. But I am not acquainted with an actual instance of tableness, though of course it may be that there is one. Thus the natural way of restating the original sentence ... is 'I am acquainted with something which *actually is* brown (viz. a sense datum) and I believe that there is a table to which this something is intimately related (viz. belongs to). (Price 1932, 63)

Price claims that when one reflects on how things visually appear it is as if one is presented with colour and shape patches. According to him, it is as if something which has these colour and shape properties actually exists. But it is not as if something that has properties such as tablehood actually exists. Visually, it is solely as if one is presented with a coloured and shaped sense datum.

More recently, commitment to sense data has seemed problematic. Still, there are philosophers who are sympathetic to the idea that introspection reveals the actual presence of something in experience. They focus on properties of experience rather than on objects present in experience. Defenders of the Mental Paint View often have such a take on what experience is like. Levine, for instance, says that

[i]t seems plausible to think of visual experience as having an intrinsic qualitative character. The reddishness of my visual experience of the diskette case seems to be a property of my experience. (Levine 1995, 227)

In introspecting one's experience, says Levine, one is aware of properties of experience *as* intrinsic to it (i.e. as mental paint properties). Reflecting on one's experience of something red

reveals that it is as if there is an intrinsic quality of experience, an intrinsic 'reddishness' present.

Both Levine and Price's claims stand in stark contrast to the currently most popular take on what experience is like which is commonly favoured by Intentionalists. According to it, the introspective evidence is this:

[i]f you are attending to how things look to you, as opposed to how they are independent of how they look, you are bringing to bear your faculty of introspection. But in so doing, you are not aware of any inner object or thing. The only objects of which you are aware are the external ones making up the scene before your eyes. Nor, to repeat, are you directly aware of any qualities of your experience. Your experience is thus transparent to you. ... The qualities to which we have direct access are the external ones, the qualities that, if they are qualities of anything are qualities of external things. (Tye 2000, 46-7, 51)

Tye insists that introspection only reveals what is represented by experience. According to him, this means that one is introspectively aware merely of ordinary mind-independent objects and their properties. In contrast to Levine and Price, Tye denies that it is as if one is presented with mental paint properties of experience or special object of experience.

Yet a different view holds that what experience is like is best characterised in Naïve Realist terms. Martin offers this characterisation:

If I can see a table, and it looks to me as if there is a table there, then what I sense is a table which exists independently of my mind, and I could not so experience if the table were not there. ... The sense-datum tradition denies the manifest fact that it seems to us as if we are presented in experience with mind-independent objects and states of affairs in the world around us. The intentional tradition denies the introspective evidence that things apparently sensed must actually be before the mind for one to experience so. (Martin 2000, 218 and 219)

Martin claims that when one introspects one's experience, it is as if one is presented with mind-independent, actually existing objects and their properties. On his view, the Sense Datum Theorist is right to insist that it looks to us as if one is presented with actually existing objects and their properties.⁷² And the Intentionalist is right to insist that it looks to us as if one is presented with ordinary, mind-independent objects and their properties.

⁷² According to Martin, defenders of mental paint properties, like Sense Datum theorists, are also right to they hold that in introspection it is as if something is actually present to mind. However, he thinks that the further details of Mental Paint Views are 'far removed from phenomenology' and much more of a distortion of phenomenal character than Sense Datum Theory. *Ibid.* 225.

We have just seen four very different takes on what experience is like. The difference comes out best when one compares what is thought to be recommended by introspection in each case: Sense Datum Theory, the Mental Paint View, Intentionalism and Naïve Realism. These metaphysics of experience are not mutually exclusive.⁷³ But they deploy radically different ontological ingredients. If one bears in mind that each is recommended by its proponents on the basis of introspective evidence, that is truly astonishing.

Tye and Levine, for instance, arrive at *diametrically opposed* views about what introspective reflection on experience reveals. Tye holds that '[t]he only objects of which you are aware are the external ones making up the scene before your eyes.' If that is right, a metaphysics of experience must individuate phenomenal properties by appeal to properties of external objects. This means such phenomenal properties are not mental paint properties of experience.⁷⁴ But that is exactly what Levine says they are on the basis of introspection. His view is that introspective reflection on experience reveals 'intrinsic qualities of experience'. And if that is right, a metaphysics of experience cannot individuate all phenomenal properties by appeal to properties of external objects without grossly violating the Phenomenal Adequacy requirement. In short, the Standard Method leads Tye and Levine in exactly opposite directions. The difference between them marks one of the main dividing lines among theories of conscious experience. Block even goes so far as to call it 'the greatest chasm in the philosophy of mind – maybe even all of philosophy'.⁷⁵

On the face of it, this should strike one as rather puzzling. These are philosophers within the same intellectual tradition, who agree on methodology, and who presumably enjoy the same kind of visual experience. Yet they radically disagree – after one step of debate – about what introspective reflection on experience delivers. This is strange because introspective evidence is supposed to be obvious by first-person reflection on experience: the *whole idea* behind the Standard Method is that we have a good grip – indeed our best grip – on visual

⁷³ As I mentioned in chapter 1, there are many examples of mixed positions. E.g. Sturgeon 2000 argues for a combination of Sense Datum Theory and Intentionalism; defenders of mental paint properties are usually partial Intentionalists about experience (e.g. Peacocke 1983).

⁷⁴ Boghossian and Velleman 1997b make an interesting comparison here. They accept that a theory of colour experience 'must respect the phenomenology of color experience: it must be compatible with what it's like to see the world as coloured.' And they agree with Tye on what the introspective evidence is: 'Mere reflection on what it's like to see colors ... reveals that color experience ... purports to acquaint us directly with properties of external objects.' (116) But on the other hand, they hold that 'colors are qualitative properties of visual experience that are mistakenly projected onto material objects.' (131)

⁷⁵ Block 1995, 19. See also Crane 2000.

phenomenology in introspection. It requires phenomenal character to be obvious when reflecting introspectively. That is the common assumption in the literature. Yet, as we have just seen, the literature also contains a wealth of conflicting views about what introspection tells us. The question that naturally arises, then, is this. If phenomenology is obvious to one as the Standard Method presupposes, then why is there so much debate and disagreement about it?⁷⁶ My answer to this question makes clear why the Standard Method cannot be used to construct a metaphysics of experience.

In the previous section, I distinguished between strict and broad look-ascriptions. I argued that the Standard Method should only be used on strict look-ascriptions. In practice, such a constraint evidently requires that we can tell the two kinds of look-ascriptions apart. This, however, turns out to be a genuine problem. In order to see why, let us consider the case of colour experience. Imagine you are walking through a forest in the autumn. You look at bright red leaves on a tree. You introspect what it is like to have your visual experience. You say: 'it looks as if there is something coloured before me.' Now ask: is this a strict or a broad look-ascription? Does it strictly look as if there is something coloured before you? In other words, we want to know whether colouredness is a phenomenal feature or an embellishment.

Well, consider why the look-ascription is plausible. Two explanations come to mind. On the one hand, the look-ascription might be plausible because colouredness answers directly to the phenomenal character of your visual experience. That would make the look-ascription strict. On the other hand, it might be plausible because two facts interact: the fact that redness answers directly to the phenomenal character of your visual experience; and the conceptual fact, taken for granted by you, that redness is a colour. In this case the look-ascription would be broad. Its plausibility would be the joint consequence of an experiential and a conceptual fact. But which is the right explanation – why does the look-ascription seem plausible?

Choosing between these two explanations is exceedingly difficult. My guess is that when you think about the case you will not be drawn solely to the first explanation. Rather, you will be drawn equally to both explanations or perhaps a little more to the second. I, for one, think the look-ascription is broad. When I introspect what it is visually like in such a case, colouredness itself does not clearly figure. The claim that it looks as if there is something coloured before

⁷⁶ For an excellent discussion of this issue see Martin 2000.

me seems right; but my best bet is that it seems right because there are two facts at work. It strictly looks as if something red is before me, and it is an accepted conceptual truth that red is a colour.

Suppose I am right and colouredness is an embellishment feature and not a phenomenal one. That means it is arrived at on the basis of background theory and the look-ascription containing it is not strict. Notice, though, *initial intuition* arguably regards the look-ascription as strict.⁷⁷ This initial impression is the result of the intimate relationship between our experience and our background beliefs. The conceptual truth that red is a colour is so entrenched in the way we understand what we see that we are apt to misconstrue the embellishment feature colouredness for a feature that we can directly read off from what experience is like. It is as if an embellishment feature has sneaked into a description of what experience is like. In this way, cognitive context – i.e. relevant background theory and beliefs – can *infect* intuition about what is strictly part of how things visually appear. Infected intuition clouds our judgement about visual phenomenology.

Someone might disagree at this point. To her, even on reflection the first explanation seems more plausible: the look-ascription is strict and colouredness is a phenomenal feature. Now, from *my* point of view, this person cannot shake off her conceptual prejudice. Her intuition about what experience is like is deeply infected. But, of course, she will think just the same of me. From *her* point of view, I am under the spell of some background theory and I cannot resist a certain way of thinking about colour, experience and introspection. She will claim that my intuition about what experience is like is deeply infected.⁷⁸

What could be done to resolve such a conflict? When intuition is infected one cannot tell on the basis of introspection that this is so. That is my point; when intuition is infected one

⁷⁷ Someone might be unconvinced by this and hold that initial intuition has it that the look-ascription ‘it looks as if there is something red before me’ is strict instead. We can simply adapt the example accordingly. For, one could reason as follows. ‘It seems right that it looks as if there is something red before me. It does so because two facts interact. First, the leaves strictly look specific shades of red. Second, it is a conceptual truth that those shades are shades of red.’ If this line of reasoning is correct, redness itself is an embellishment feature of one’s experience. On the other hand, one could also reason like this. ‘It seems right to claim that it looks as if there is something red before me. It does so because the leaves strictly look red to me.’ This line of thought suggests redness is a phenomenal feature. In my view, this case is much trickier and I have no determinate intuition about it. Both explanations seem equally good. While reflection on colouredness itself yields some intuitive force to the claim that it is an embellishment feature – by my lights anyway – I cannot find a clear intuitive take on the case of redness at all.

⁷⁸ Again, the case of red and shade of red may be more persuasive here. See previous footnote.

mistakes broad for strict-look-ascription. These mistakes cannot be ruled out introspectively.⁷⁹ The only option is to compare background theories and debate which one is likely to be true. Perhaps this would produce agreement about which look-ascriptions ought to count as strict and which as broad. But, importantly, this resolution to the conflict about the deliverance of introspection is not procured by introspecting what experience is like. Quite the reverse: what experience is really like is settled by non-introspective, theoretical consideration.

Consider the conflict about experience with which we began this section. The notion of infected intuition supplies us with the resources to explain the puzzling variety of characterisations of phenomenal character. In each case intuition about the strict description of what experience is like is infected by background theory. Such theory feeds expectation, which in turn influences intuition. Embellishment features sneak into look-ascriptions despite the fact that one is convinced, on the basis of introspection, that these ascriptions are strict. Accordingly, even when philosophers feel strongly that they are putting forward characterisations of phenomenal character solely on the basis of introspecting what experience is like, their characterisation is in fact contaminated by background theory. On its own, of course, this would not explain the conflict between them. However, consider the plain fact that philosophers vary in their background beliefs. In general thinkers are never exact belief duplicates of each other. Furthermore, philosophers in particular diverge in their deep commitments about mind, world and the relation between them. Some of those theoretical differences make for different intuitions about the true characterisation of visual phenomenology. My proposal is that *this* is why there is such debate about the strict characterisation of it. The debate turns on cases in which intuition is influenced by cognitive context. Such intuition is infected by background commitment.

The conflict between Tye and Levine, for instance, can be easily explained by appeal to infected intuition. Their intuition about relevant introspective evidence is differently influenced by their cognitive contexts. Tye believes experience to reflect the common sense view of the world. He expects experience to have a realist character. This expectation influences his intuition about the character of experience itself. It leads him to say that features are experienced *as* properties of ordinary external objects. By contrast, Levine focuses on the idea

⁷⁹ Let us set aside cases where a single person or a few people are in conflict with an overwhelming majority. When dissenting opinion comes from an insignificantly small corner, it might reasonably be thought to be negligible or an aberration explained by reference to a fault on the part of the dissenting few. That is not the case in the matter at hand, where there is no introspection-based consensus about what experience is like.

– made popular by Nagel – that experience is suffused with subjectivity.⁸⁰ He believes that subjectivity is reflected in the character of experience. This influences his intuition about the character of experience. It leads him to say that features are experienced *as* mental paint properties of experience.

This explanation accommodates two important assumptions that otherwise are difficult to reconcile. First, I hold that participants in the debate do not have radically different kinds of visual phenomenology. I take this to be uncontroversial. To explain variation in characterisation of phenomenal character by appeal to variation in visual experience is unacceptable. According to my explanation, however, participants in the debate disagree due to variation in infected intuition. They do not have different kinds of experience, they have different views about experience. Those views generate strong intuition on all sides of the debate.

Second, I do not assume asymmetries among abilities to introspect phenomenal character. I make sense of the disagreement between participants of the debate without alleging that some are radically deficient when introspecting experiences, while others get perfect score. To see why this is an advantage, consider the idea that phenomenal character is obvious to introspection. This idea finds some resonance in our ordinary thinking. We do feel the deliverance of introspection is obvious when we reflect on our own thought and experience. This is what drives the Standard Method. The Phenomenal Adequacy requirement seems to be a powerful constraint because it seems to run on pre-theoretic data that everyone enjoying visual experience has plainly at their disposal. Similarly, the justificatory force attached to the views attained by the Standard Method stems from this conception of introspective evidence. But the idea that phenomenal character is obvious to first-person reflection which is responsible for these things is in tension with the suggestion that we are radically asymmetric in our ability to introspect phenomenal character. A defender of the Standard Method therefore should be keen to avoid such asymmetries. For they would make it difficult to see how phenomenology could be obvious to us in introspection.

My explanation is compatible with the assumption that we are equally good at introspecting the character of experience. The explanatory work is done by infected intuition. But we can

⁸⁰ Levine 2001, 6-7. See also Nagel 1974.

also rescue a sense of introspective obviousness. True, I hold that participants in the debate have infected intuition about what experience is strictly like. And I claim that our introspective grip on the strict contours of visual experience is rather limited, contrary to the general assumption in the literature. However, I allow for an important sense in which appearances are obvious, enough of a sense to account for our ordinary conviction in this respect. We have been discussing intuition about whether look-ascription is broad or strict. I argued that such intuition is infected. But I have not claimed that one is unsure about whether things look as ascribed. The uncertainty attaches to what kind of 'look' is in play. *That* it looks a certain way can be obvious without it being obvious that it does so in a strict or broad manner. Being puzzled by the debate about appearances stems from confusing these two senses in which appearances might be obvious.

My explanation thus preserves the ordinary feeling that how things look to one is obvious in introspection. But there is a cost involved: how things *strictly look* is not introspectively obvious. I do not think we can do better than this. In fact, explanations of the conflict about characterisations of visual phenomenology – in particular, those put forward by users of the Standard Method – leave us worse off. They face the choice between relinquishing either the sameness of experience had by participants of the debate, or the sameness of introspective access enjoyed by them, or the obviousness of visual phenomenology. The sameness of experience is a non-negotiable assumption. This leaves the sameness of introspective access and obviousness of visual phenomenology. But the Standard Method requires a strong sense in which appearances are obvious. Consequently, for users of the Standard Method, an explanation of the conflict has to be at the expense of sameness of introspective access. But this does not sit well at all with the idea that visual phenomenology is obvious in this strong sense. There is, therefore, considerable tension inherent in Standard-Method-friendly explanations of the conflict. By contrast, my explanation is free of such tension.

The upshot for the Standard Method is grave. When philosophers presuppose that we introspectively become aware of phenomenal character in such a way that it yields strict introspective look-ascriptions they make a non-trivial assumption. That assumption is not warranted. For embellishment features sneak into introspection-based descriptions of what experience is like. Philosophers simply ignore the fact that introspection-based intuition is deeply infected by background belief.

The trouble, of course, is that infected intuition is a bad guide to the line between broad and strict look-ascription. After all, infected intuition is governed by theoretical commitment. When asked to say how things strictly look, answers are not grounded solely in experience. They are driven by what experience *ought* to be given one's background views. This does not automatically imply that resulting takes on phenomenal character are mistaken. But it does mean they are not grounded directly in what experience is like. We cannot speak, then, of 'primary introspective data' to which a theory of experience must answer. Characterisation of the data is driven by background theory. Hence to apply the Standard Method in this debate is to abuse it. For, to apply it is to induce constraints on a metaphysics of experience which flow from one's background theory, while treating those constraints as if they come from experience itself. But such constraints are bogus: they do not come from experience itself. They are *not* what users of the Standard Method presuppose they are.

The shortcomings of introspection make it impossible for the Standard Method to be employed legitimately. Philosophers often display skewed expectation about the kind of access introspective awareness of phenomenal character affords. This is rather surprising especially in contemporary debates, given the prevailing disparaging attitude about other kinds of introspective knowledge.⁸¹ In the case of introspection of phenomenal character, philosophers seem to regard introspection as a perfectly good tool for empirical investigation. Specifically, they seem to hold that we can introspectively discover what experience is like. I have argued that such a view of introspection is inappropriate. Philosophers should not use the Standard Method to adjudicate debates about the nature of visual experience. It leads to a misguided conception of what can justifiably be considered part of visual phenomenology. Worse, it leads to illegitimate conclusions about the metaphysics of experience. In the end, we are left with nothing but a general understanding of the Phenomenal Adequacy requirement. Although it seems eminently sensible to demand that an account of experience must not distort phenomenology, the requirement resists being harnessed into a positive constraint on theory construction.

⁸¹ See, for instance, Kornblith 1989.

Chapter 6

A Loose End and Some Speculation

(1) Introduction

In the previous five chapters of this thesis I have articulated and critiqued the dominant methodology for constructing a theory of visual experience. My aim was purely negative. The dominant methodology is based on introspection; but I argued that introspection is not a reliable guide to the nature of visual experience. This raises a host of questions and in this last chapter of my thesis, I begin to answer them. I will focus on two main areas. The first concerns introspection-based claims about visual phenomenology. Given my disparaging attitude to the acceptability of such claims, serious questions ensue about my own conception of visual phenomenology. Do I think that visual phenomenology is a real phenomenon? Related to this one might ask whether there are any introspection-based claims at all that survive my criticism and what role they might play, if any, in constructing a theory of visual experience. I will turn to these issues in section (2). The second area concerns more general questions about methodology. Since I have shown that we cannot legitimately use an introspection-based methodology for constructing a philosophical theory of visual experience, what do I suggest we do instead in order to construct such a theory? In other words, what, if anything, is the right methodology for constructing a philosophical theory of visual experience? Although these are questions that go far beyond the scope of this thesis, I will briefly speak to them in section (3).

(2) Eliminativism about visual phenomenology

Our main access to visual phenomenology arguably comes via introspection. But I have shown that this access is problematic and that, as a result, we cannot trust the deliverance of introspection about phenomenal character. Does this mean that I am an Eliminativist about visual phenomenology? Eliminativists about visual phenomenology hold that there are no facts answering to (visual) appearance talk and there is no real phenomenon that we capture in look-ascriptions such as 'It looks as if there is something blue before me.' This is because they insist that there are no facts about what experience is like, or, perhaps better put, that there is nothing experience is like for the subject. In short, Eliminativists hold that conscious visual phenomenology does not exist. Of course, they then have to explain our evident ordinary belief in visual phenomenology and our sincere use of look-ascriptions. Usually, Eliminativists

provide such an explanation in terms of a cognitive illusion of some kind (see, e.g. Dennett 1991; Rey 1995).

As it happens, I do not think that Eliminativism is an attractive position about visual phenomenology (or conscious experience in general). To say that there is nothing it is like to undergo one's experiences strikes me as implausible. Moreover, to hold that our belief in, and talk about, visual phenomenology is based *entirely* on a massive cognitive illusion seems no less fanciful than to insist, say, that they are based on special phenomenal properties. So, I certainly would not want to end up with an Eliminativist position about visual phenomenology.

Although I expressed dissatisfaction with Eliminativism about conscious visual phenomenology, I have not given an argument against such a position. I do not have to do so, as long as I can show that my scepticism about our introspective access to visual phenomenology does not beget any Eliminativism about it. And this can be done. True, I am highly sceptical about our introspection-based knowledge of the details of visual phenomenology. But this does not force me to make the much more radical claim that there are no facts about visual phenomenology. Nor does my sceptical attitude concerning our epistemic access to visual phenomenology entail that we are subject to some sort of cognitive illusion concerning it.

One way to show this would be to insist that we can still have certain introspection-based knowledge about phenomenal character – namely, that there is something it is like to undergo visual experience. The following analogy may serve to make this point. Consider our first-personal knowledge of our own mind – of the conscious self, or the 'I' of our conscious states. It is a plausible hypothesis that one important source of one's knowledge of the existence the self is introspection-based. Yet at the same time, it is reasonable to be doubtful that such introspective access supplies one with genuine attributive knowledge about the self. That is, one might justifiably be sceptical that first-person reflection on one's own mind can furnish an adequate conception of the self by revealing to us what kind of thing the self is.⁸² Notwithstanding this critical attitude towards attributive introspection-based knowledge of the self, it is arguably a different kettle of fish to deny that one might know introspectively of one's own existence. Scepticism about the idea that one can tell introspectively what kind of thing

⁸² Although consider the projects of Descartes 1984, especially the *Second Meditation* and Kant 1929, especially the *Transcendental Deduction* for a different attitude on this issue.

the self is does not entail a Humean bundle theory, or any other Eliminativist view of the self. Indeed, it is perfectly compatible to reject Descartes' conception of the mind, as it is arrived at by first-person reflection, but still accept his proof of one's own existence – the famous 'cogito ergo sum'. Similarly, I might say that one can be sceptical about one's introspective access to the phenomenology of visual experience in the sense that we ought not to trust attributive introspection-based claims about it. However, this does not thereby call into question the very existence of visual phenomenology. Hence, one might reject the idea that one can obtain detailed descriptions of visual phenomenology in introspection, but still accept that introspection gives us some reason to hold that there are phenomenal facts about visual experience or that there is something it is like to undergo such experience. As the analogy with knowledge of the self illustrates, this is not an incoherent position.

But is not a minimum of descriptive or attributive knowledge necessary in order to have existential knowledge of a given thing, property or phenomenon? I shall side-step a direct answer to this question. On the one hand, as we shall see below, this is because there is *some* descriptive knowledge about visual phenomenology available to one in introspection. Of course, if there are truths about visual phenomenology that we can know, then they have to be shown to be immune to the criticisms I have put forward in this thesis. As a result, they are not going to be detailed claims about phenomenal character like the ones attacked in chapters 2 to 4. Moreover, they have to be exempt from the problem of infected intuition discussed in chapter 5. I think such truths can be found. However, as we shall see, they are not the kind of claims that can serve as introspective evidence in theory construction. In other words, they cannot be used to resuscitate the Standard Method.

On the other hand, and more importantly, there is no need for me to hold that the source of our knowledge that there is something it is like to undergo experience is purely introspection-based. Instead, I want to say that while such knowledge is made available to one in introspection, its source may be partly non-introspective. In chapter 5, I made the point that how something looks may introspectively seem perfectly obvious to one, even though one could not tell, on the basis of such introspection, whether this is so in a strict or a broad sense of looking. So, I want to say, it is obvious to one in introspection that there is something it is like to undergo experience. Yet, the basis for this claim may not be introspection of what experience is like alone. Let me elaborate on this with the help of a more specific example involving colour experience. This will also make clear in what sense there is some attributive

introspective evidence about phenomenal character available to one when reflecting on one's experience.

Colour experience is generally taken to present a paradigm case of visual phenomenology. If there is any legitimate introspective evidence about phenomenal character, we should expect there to be some concerning colour experience. But we need to be clear about what sort of introspective evidence this is. Recall the brief discussion of look-ascriptions based on colour experience in chapter 5, section (4). There we asked how it looks to one when seeing some red leaves. More specifically, given the distinction between broad and strict look-ascriptions, we wanted to know how it strictly looks to one when seeing some red leaves. But an answer was hard to come by. We saw that when one tries to fix introspectively on how colours exactly appear to one intuition falters. Does it strictly look as if there are red things before one or things the shade of red? We cannot say. Introspection yields no sound grip on the line between broad and strict look-ascription even here, in what is supposed to be a paradigm case of visual phenomenology. As a result, we cannot be very exact concerning the details of how it strictly looks. It might look as if there is something red before one, or it might look as if there is something the shade of red before one. Thus one thing the colour case shows is that we do not really have a firm (introspective) grip on what experience is like exactly.

Given these difficulties, why do I hold that introspective look-ascriptions mentioning colour features *ever* have anything to do with visual phenomenology? One might suggest that we should draw the conclusion that such colour features are always and entirely embellishments. As a consequence, on this suggestion one would reject the assumption that colour experience presents a case of visual phenomenology at all, *a fortiori* it does not present a paradigm case of it. But to insist that there is no colour-related visual phenomenology offends all sorts of common and other sense. One will be hard-pressed to find anyone objecting to the thought that our colour awareness in general has as part of it certain experiential visual events.⁸³ Denying this would require a drastic change of most conceptions of visual experience beyond recognition. We certainly ordinarily think of colour awareness as a visually based phenomenon. Its denial would, moreover, have to accommodate empirical facts that strongly suggest that a subject's colour awareness is at bottom due to her visual experience. For instance, a

⁸³ Ignore for the moment our ability to imagine colours. One might argue that imagining colours depends on having had certain visual experiences of colour. Given Hume's missing shade of blue, this may not require having experience the exact colour one imagines, though.

congenitally blind person does not have any colour awareness. The assumption that our ability to be aware of colour is importantly based in our ability to have visual experiences is therefore not a hugely controversial assumption. It is fair to say that one brings this natural assumption to one's introspective reflection on visual experience. If, on so introspecting, it looks to one as if there is something coloured before one, then, given the assumption about colour awareness and visual experience, one knows that one is aware of some colour-related visual phenomenology.⁸⁴ This is the sense in which we are introspectively aware that there is something it is like to undergo one's experience.

At the same time, however, and as I noted above, we do not have any clear introspective grasp of the details of how we are visually aware of colour in experience. And the assumption we bring to introspection does not entail any commitments about how we are aware of colour. So, truths concerning colour-related visual phenomenology available to one in introspection do not comprise any such details. To avoid the problem of infected intuition perhaps one could make introspection-based claims of sufficient generality. I am not quite sure how one might express a look-ascription of the required generality. It would have to be something along the lines of the following proposal: 'it looks as if there is something coloured-in-some-general-sense before one'. But one has to be careful not to claim that the generality itself is part of how it strictly looks to one, in the sense that this is a determinate detail of how it strictly looks. For this would be an unwarranted claim. With this in mind, it might be better to say something like this: 'In some sense I cannot specify, it looks as if there is something coloured before one.' Another, and maybe more promising suggestion, is to make introspection-based claims of a disjunctive nature. The idea is to list all the ways in which it might strictly look to one and join them into a disjunctive looks-ascription. Hence, one might say 'it looks either as if there is something coloured before one, or as if there is something red before one, or as if there is something the shade of red before one, etc.'. Again, notice that one must not claim that there is a disjunctive look; rather, one claims that it looks either one way, or it looks another way, or another way, etc.

⁸⁴ There are exceptions, where the colour-related features in the look-ascription are entirely embellishments. Suppose one knows that a friend has a skin condition that manifests itself in bright red splotches on her arms. These are very sensitive to sunlight, so when the splotches appear, your friend covers them up in a white bandage. You see her walking by one day, wearing a white bandage on her arm. On this occasion you might say, 'It looks as if she has red splotches on her arm again'. Of course, you don't see the red splotches, you just infer them to be there from the presence of the bandage.

So, there is some sort of attributive knowledge about the phenomenal character of visual experience available to one in introspection. This is introspective evidence about colour-related visual phenomenology. However, although these are examples of introspective evidence concerning phenomenal character, they are not at all like the claims about visual phenomenology that I have attacked in this thesis. They do not contain any details what experience is like exactly. As we have just seen, they are thoroughly general or disjunctive claims. Because of this they are certainly not helpful with respect to use of the Standard Method. When constructing a metaphysics of experience it is the details of visual appearance that lend force to the Standard Method. Without them the ‘primary introspective data’ are too meagre to do any real work in constraining a metaphysics of experience. Once those details are removed the Standard Method becomes toothless. Of the theories of experience discussed, any one of them can accommodate such general or disjunctive claims about phenomenal character.

So, does this mean that introspection-based claims about phenomenal character play no role whatsoever in construction of an account of visual experience? Well, not exactly. Even if such introspective evidence cannot be used to construct one type of theory rather than another, it still constrains all theories equally. Although all can accommodate it, the point is that they all have to do so. Thus, to go back to the colour case again, the introspective evidence shows that an adequate theory of visual experience needs to account for the fact that experience gives rise to colour awareness. What this amounts to is an understanding of the Phenomenal Adequacy requirement as a very general constraint on all theories of visual experience.

(3) Methodology – which is the right one?

As I acknowledge at the beginning of this chapter, the fact that I reject an introspection-based methodology for constructing a philosophical theory of visual experience immediately raises the question what the right methodology for such a project is. This is taking for granted that constructing a philosophical theory of visual is a viable project. But perhaps one might wonder whether the failure of the introspection-based methodology is not a sign of something amiss with the project itself. I have, at present, no worked-out answer to these questions. But they are important questions. In the rest of this chapter I will provide an outline of a promising research strategy by sketching the issues that figure in an investigation into an appropriate methodology for constructing a metaphysics of experience.

In chapter 1, I said that the theory of visual experience lies at the intersection of philosophy of mind, metaphysics and epistemology. But visual experience is also investigated by neighbouring scientific disciplines. It is the object of much research in the various and interacting branches of cognitive science, neuro-science and psychology. (See, e.g. Marr 1982; Spelke 1990; Kosslyn and Osherson 1995; Goodale and Milner 1995; Leyton 1999) Not surprisingly, given the common focus, philosophical work on visual experience sometimes has interdisciplinary character, or at least it makes use of results from studies in these other disciplines.⁸⁵ This makes questions of methodology all the more pressing. What sort of evidence is permissible in constructing a *philosophical* theory of experience? How do philosophical and scientific theories fit together? So we can see here how the question arising at the end of this thesis – which is the right methodology given that it is not an introspection-based one – naturally fits into a broader context of methodological concerns in the philosophy of perception.

As a first step in pursuit of these questions, one would explore other non-introspective methods that might be used by philosophers to construct a philosophical theory of experience. Let me introduce two of these here. They are what one may think of as ‘typically philosophical’ methodologies, because they are both variants of conceptual analysis. Although they do not exhaust the possibilities (not even among varieties of conceptual analysis), considering them will allow me to expose a crucial issue that, in my view, is central to an investigation of the above questions.

The first method is what we may call ‘classical conceptual analysis’. It seeks to construct a conceptual analysis of visual experience on the basis of apriori reflection. In particular, it looks for apriori necessary and sufficient conditions that capture exhaustively and exclusively all instances of our concept of visual experience. The idea is that in giving these conditions, one defines the concept under analysis in more fundamental, but apriori derivable terms. A standard example of this classical brand of conceptual analysis is the analysis of knowledge into justified, true belief. There is also a well-known example in the philosophy of perception, namely the Causal Theory of Perception (e.g. Grice 1961; Strawson 1979). Since the demand is

⁸⁵ A good example is research in Goodale and Milner (1995) concerning different streams of visual processing in the brain (the dorsal and the ventral stream). Their central case involves a certain visually impaired subject who cannot recognise ordinary objects or faces, or even simple shapes, but is still capable of carrying out visually-based motor-activities. One finds frequent mention of this discussion in philosophical work. (See, e.g. Byrne 2001; Campbell 2002; Kelly, forthcoming)

that the apriori conditions of a given proposed analysis be necessary and sufficient conditions, it is very much part of this method that they are tested by reflecting whether the concept so defined would apply in certain possible situations. If it does where we intuitively feel it should not, or if it does not where we intuitively feel it should apply, one has found a counterexample to the proposed definition. Indeed, the testing process is an integral component in the search for the right set of apriori conditions. A successful conceptual analysis of the classical kind has no such counterexamples. As Jackson 1994 puts it ‘intuitions about possible situations [are] the meat and potatoes of conceptual analysis’ (165).

The second variant of conceptual analysis, which is primarily associated with David Lewis and Frank Jackson (Lewis 1994; Jackson 1998), also employs apriori intuition. The latter is at work in the collection of common-sense platitudes about visual experience, i.e. in the collection of statements that characterise our ordinary judgements and inferences involving the concept under analysis. These platitudes are expressed in such a way that the terms referring to visual experience only occur in predicative form (i.e. in the property-name style). Next, the platitudes are written down in a long conjunction, where each visual experiential property term is taken out and replaced by a free variable. The result is a statement that may be regarded as defining the visual experiential property in terms of its relation to other properties and things in the world, as these relations are contained in the common sense platitudes. In other words, the visual experiential property gets defined as the property – whichever it is – that plays the role specified by the statement consisting of conjunctions of platitudes. It is then open to the theorist to find an adequate property, and, for various reasons, Lewis and Jackson would both opt for a naturalistic one. But this naturalist twist is independent of the prior conceptual claim – the definition of the visual experiential property in terms of its relation to other things and properties in the world. In principle, one might hold that there is a non-naturalistic property that plays the role detailed in the analysis of the concept.

As we have just seen, both of these methodologies accord a prime role to *ordinary intuition* in theory construction. An important part of this general reliance on ordinary intuition is that the latter is assumed to be a reliable guide to reality. Specifically, in our case at hand, it would be presupposed that ordinary intuition is a reliable guide to the nature of visual experience. This assumption has been hotly contested by some psychologically informed philosophers. They use results from empirical psychology to suggest that ordinary intuition is not to be trusted at all. For example, one might hold that while the philosopher would be perfectly reasonable in

giving a theory of how our ordinary concept of visual experience works, she is not licensed to draw any conclusions from this about the nature of visual experience itself. This is because the nature of experience is an empirical matter, which cannot be investigated apriori from the philosopher's armchair. (E.g. Gopnik and Schwitzgebel 1998)

As a consequence of such criticisms, some philosophers want to re-orient philosophy and render it a purely empirically-driven discipline (e.g. Cummins 1998). Indeed, there currently rages a fierce debate in which nothing less than the status of philosophy as an autonomous discipline is at stake (See, e.g. DePaul & Ramsey 1998; Laurence & Margolis, forthcoming). One can engage in this debate viewed through the prism of the philosophy of perception. Thereby, as I indicated above, the debate provides the framework for one's pursuit of the questions about methodology for the construction of a philosophical account of visual experience.

One way in which we might helpfully think about this issue is in terms of Sellars' problem: how do common-sense and scientific views of visual experience fit together? There are three types of response. The first one comes from the radical empirically-minded philosopher. She simply rejects the question. For she says that philosophy should investigate no more than the foundations of the science of visual experience. The second type of response comes from the radical common-sense philosopher. She also simply rejects the question, but for a different reason. She maintains that philosophical investigation of visual experience should be solely concerned with the foundations of everyday practice. The third type of response lies between these extremes and is based on a more moderate position. It holds that truths from science and common-sense should fit together. The moderate position says that philosophy and science can both benefit from one another by joining forces to investigate visual experience.

These three types of responses to Sellars' problem provide one with a basic choice concerning the right methodology for a theory of visual experience. In my view, the best option is a version of the third response and so the objective should be to provide a methodology for constructing a philosophical theory of visual experience in the moderate sense. Such a methodology needs to supply an account of both common-sense intuition and the interaction of it with empirical data. These are essential ingredients in spelling out a substantial philosophical project in this area. As I see it, this involves articulating a middle position for the

philosopher of perception, between mere concept police for the scientist and pure armchair theoretician.

The main worry, of course, is that a middle position will be unstable and thus that it will be prone to collapse into one of the extreme positions under theoretical pressure. One has to look at interdisciplinary work on perception with precisely this issue in mind. Such work appears to be an instance of successful co-operation between philosophy and science (E.g. Eilan et al. 1993). It is, one might argue, an excellent example of what David Papineau calls 'the continuity of philosophy with empirical science' (Papineau 1993, 2). But one might wonder whether the role of the philosopher in such work is diminished to merely assisting the scientist in sorting out her conceptual tools.

Despite concerns such as these, I think that a middle position of this sort will be our best bet. What I have said about it is, of course, very sketchy. But that is no surprise, given that the ideas presented in this section are only meant as an outline for a possible research project. Let me emphasise again that that this goes beyond the aims and scope of this thesis. As such, the proposal here is merely an indication of how I think one should pursue one of the main questions arising from my thesis. And it is a bit of speculation about what the right methodology is for constructing a philosophical theory of visual experience, once the question is placed into a wider context.

Summary conclusion

Let me now recap the main line of argument of this thesis. This is meant as a condensed digest only, and I will suppress many of the details. I also will not talk about the last chapter, since it deals with questions arising from the main conclusions in the thesis.

This is a thesis about philosophical approaches to visual experience. Specifically, I looked at the methodology employed by those who construct philosophical theories of visual experience. I argue they standardly use a methodology that is essentially based on introspection. That is, these philosophers use claims made on the basis of first-person reflection on experience – claims about visual phenomenology – to argue about the nature of experience. The aim of my thesis is to undermine this introspection-based approach to the theory of visual experience.

In chapter 1 I laid out the background of the discussion and articulated the methodology to be critiqued – ‘the Standard Method’. I showed that philosophers hold that there is a range of data concerning visual phenomenology that any good account of experience must underwrite in order to be phenomenally adequate. They also assume that we have access to this data via introspection. When introspecting experience, one forms introspective beliefs about the phenomenology of experience. These beliefs are taken to provide data or *introspective evidence* precisely because they are supposed to be formed directly on the basis of the phenomenology of experience itself. As such, introspective evidence is held to be unspoilt by theory. The Standard Method uses introspective evidence to help build a metaphysics of experience. The strategy is to use one’s introspective fix on experience to identify properties in terms of which one can best underwrite visual phenomenology. The idea is that one thereby gains purchase on the key aspect of experience. Introspective evidence thus serves to motivate and ground substantial metaphysical conclusions. It provides the starting point for one’s view of the underlying nature of experience.

Crucially, the Standard Method presupposes we have a direct and unproblematic introspective access to the phenomenology of our visual experience. I argued in subsequent chapters that this assumption is mistaken. My strategy was two-fold. First, I attacked the two most popular introspection-based claims about visual phenomenology put forward by users of the Standard Method. The latter insist that an adequate view of the nature of experience has to underwrite the introspective evidence captured in these claims. And, they hold this requirement favours

their own view of the nature of experience over their rivals' views. I argued it is highly questionable whether introspection of experience really does support these claims (chapters 2-4).

In chapter 2, then, I examined the first of the two popular claims about visual phenomenology. It is the claim that experience is transparent. The idea is that when we introspect experience, it looks as if we are presented with the mind-independent objects and properties that the experience is about – but we are not introspectively aware of the experience itself. I argued there are actually two independent claims which are run together under the heading of transparency. The Looking-through claim says introspection of what experience is like reveals only what experience is about. The Mind-independence claim says introspection of what visual experience is like reveals that it looks as if mind-independent objects and their properties are before one.

I then discussed the Looking-through claim, reserving the Mind-independence claim for the chapter 3. I first showed that, even if the Looking-through claim is accepted, it does not help users of the Standard Method. For it is neutral between different views of the nature of experience – all the major views can underwrite it. I then turned to the question whether the Looking-through claim is acceptable. I argued there are worries that should lead one to reject it. For one thing, it is difficult to see how mere introspection can reveal that it is experiential subject-matter one is aware of and nothing else. Moreover, I suggested that when we introspect our experience, there must be some sense in which we are aware of our experience. But the defender of the Looking-through claim has trouble accounting for this.

In chapter 3, I attacked the Mind-independence claim. Many theorists of visual experience help themselves to the idea that in such experience 'the world is just presented to one'. They claim that when we introspect visual experience it is as if we are presented with mind-independent objects and their properties. Thus, apparent mind-independence is taken to be part of the phenomenology of visual experience. If accepted, the Mind-independence claim can be used to argue in favour of Intentionalism and Naïve Realism and against Sense Datum Theory and the Mental Paint View. I showed that this claim is propped up by a widespread assumption implicit in the literature. It is assumed that there is an intimate connection between space and mind-independence in visual phenomenology. The idea is that when we introspect experience it is as if there are mind-independent things before us *in virtue* of how things appear spatially to

us. The chief part of the chapter was spent undermining this assumption. I argued that spatial appearance itself does not give rise to the appearance of mind-independence. Further, even if one were to accept that there exists a conceptual connection between space and mind-independence, this has no obvious bearing on visual phenomenology. So, the Mind-independence claim is unacceptable.

This completed my discussion and rejection of the first popular claim about visual phenomenology, i.e. the claim that experience is transparent. In fact, the latter consists in two claims run together. Although the Looking-through claim may perhaps be held to be acceptable, it is neutral between almost all views of experience. It is therefore useless in the Standard Method. The Mind-independence claim is not neutral in this way. However, it is unacceptable.

In chapter 4, I discussed the second of the two popular claims about visual phenomenology to which users of the Standard Method draw attention. It says that when we introspect experience it is as if we are presented with actually existing objects and their properties. This claim is primarily associated with defenders of Sense Datum Theory. They put forward a principle about the nature of phenomenal character – the Phenomenal Principle. The Phenomenal Principle says that when it looks to one as if, say, there is a green square before one, then there exists an object that has the properties green and square, to which one is directly related. It supports the Sense Datum Theory. Sense Datum Theorists hold that this principle is grounded in visual phenomenology as it is expressed by the introspection-based claim above. I argued that once this claim is understood correctly, it cannot be thought to ground the Phenomenal Principle. I pointed out that rivals of Sense Datum Theory put forward a very similar claim about visual phenomenology. I showed this claim is a weaker but much more plausible version of the one endorsed by Sense Datum Theorists. However, this weaker claim is not sufficient to recommend the Phenomenal Principle rather than an alternative one, the Intentionalist Principle. The latter says that when it looks to one as if there is a green square before one, then one is in an intentional state of a certain kind, namely one that represents to one that there is a green square before one. This principle supports Intentionalism. But if the weaker claim about visual phenomenology gives equal support to these different principles, it does not make much sense to think of it as *grounding* any of them. Consequently, this introspection-based claim about visual phenomenology cannot play the role in constructing a theory of visual experience assigned to it by users of the Standard Method.

In chapter 5, I launched the second part of my overall strategy to undermine the Standard Method. Instead of looking at particular introspection-based claims that users of the Standard Method put forward, I critiqued the methodology directly. I pointed out that for the deliverance of introspection to be genuine data in the construction of a metaphysics of experience, that deliverance must be 'strict'. It must be based directly and solely on visual phenomenology itself. But, I argue, that is not so. The deliverance of introspection is essentially theory-infected. In large measure, it is a function of what the introspecting subject believes. This generates serious disagreement about what the introspective evidence is. We find ample documentation of such disagreement in the literature: philosophers disagree wildly about what the intuitive deliverance of introspection is. I argued that their intuitions about this are driven by theory, driven by their background views about mind and world. This destroys the whole point of the Standard Method. Its purpose is to use *pre*-theoretic data about visual phenomenology to constrain one's metaphysics of experience. These are supposed to be constraints on theory which flow from visual phenomenology itself. But it turns out that the constraints in play are based on a theory-driven selection of introspective evidence.

This concludes my case against the Standard Method. In a nutshell, it must be rejected because it is based on a false assumption. The assumption is that we have direct and unproblematic introspective access to the phenomenology of our visual experience. We do not. Hence the Standard Method is unsound. Yet it is the dominant methodology in the area: it has played a key role in most influential work on visual experience in the last century and it does the same in most work today. My critique shows that, to the extent that the Standard Method is involved, all this work is methodologically unsound.

Bibliography

- Anscombe, Elisabeth. 1965. 'The Intentionality of Sensation: A Grammatical Feature.' In R. J. Butler (ed.), *Analytical Philosophy*, second series, 158-190. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Armstrong, David M. 1968. *A Materialist Theory of the Mind*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- _____. 1997. 'What is Consciousness?' In *The Nature of Consciousness*, N. Block, O. Flanagan, and G. Güzeldere (eds.), 721-8. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Excerpt from his *The Nature of Mind*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press (1981).
- Austin, J. L. 1962. *Sense and Sensibilia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ayer, A. J. 1936. *Language, Truth and Logic*. London: V. Gollancz.
- _____. 1940. *The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge*. St. Martin's Library.
- Baldwin, Thomas. 1990. *G. E. Moore*. London: Routledge.
- Berkeley, George. 1975. 'An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision.' In his *Philosophical Works*, Michael Ayers (ed.), 7-70. London: Everyman. Originally published in 1709.
- Bennett, Jonathan. 1971. *Locke, Berkeley, Hume: Central Themes*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Block, Ned. 1980. 'Troubles with functionalism.' In N. Block (ed.), *Readings in Philosophy of Psychology* Vol. 1, 268-305. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- _____. 1995. 'Mental Paint and Mental Latex.' In E. Villanueva (ed.), *Philosophical Issues* 7, 19-49. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview Publishing Company.
- _____. 1997. 'On a Confusion About a Function of Consciousness.' In N. Block, O. Flanagan, and G. Güzeldere (eds.), *The Nature of Consciousness*, 375-415. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Originally published in *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*, 18, 227-247, (1995).
- Boghossian, Paul and Velleman, J. David. 1997a. 'Colour as a Secondary Quality.' In A. Byrne and D. Hilbert (eds.), *Readings on Color*, volume 1. 81-103. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Originally published in *Mind* 98, 81-103, (1989)
- _____. 1997b. 'Physicalist Theories of Color.' In A. Byrne and D. Hilbert (eds.), *Readings on Color*, volume 1. 105-136. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Originally published in *Philosophical Review* 100, 61-106, (1991).
- Brentano, Franz. 1973. *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, English edition L. McAlister (ed.), London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. Originally published in 1874.
- Brewer, Bill. 1999. *Perception and Reason*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Broad, C. D. 1965a. 'The Theory of Sensa.' In R. Swartz (ed.), *Perceiving, Sensing and Knowing*, 85-129. New York: Anchor Books. Excerpt from C.D. Broad, *Scientific Thought*, Routledge: London (1923).

- _____. 1965b. 'Some Elementary Reflexions on Sense-Perception.' In R. Swartz (ed.), *Perceiving, Sensing and Knowing*, 27-48. New York: Anchor Books. Originally published in *Philosophy* 27, (1952).
- Byrne, Alex. 2001. 'Intentionalism Defended.' *Philosophical Review* 110: 199-240.
- Campbell, John. 1997. 'A Simple View of Colour.' In A. Byrne and D. Hilbert (eds.), *Readings on Color*, volume 1, 177-190. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- _____. 2002. *Reference and Consciousness*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Carnap, R. 1967. *The logical structure of the world: pseudo problems in philosophy*. Translated by R. George. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. Originally published in 1928.
- Carruthers, Peter. 1998. 'Animal Subjectivity.' *Psyche* volume 4/no.3.
- Chalmers, David J. 1996. *The Conscious Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chisholm, Roderick. 1942. 'The Problem of the Speckled Hen.' *Mind* 51: 368-73.
- _____. 1957. *Perceiving: A Philosophical Study*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- _____. 1966. *Theory of Knowledge*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Crane, Tim. 1992. 'The Non-Conceptual Content of Experience.' In T. Crane (ed.), *The contents of experience*, 136-157. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 1995. *The Mechanical Mind*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- _____. 1998. 'Intentionality as the Mark of the Mental.' In A. O'Hear (ed.), *Current Issues in the Philosophy of Mind*, 229-51. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 2000. 'The Origins of Qualia.' In T. Crane and S. Patterson (eds.), *History of the Mind-Body Problem*, 169-194. London: Routledge.
- _____. 2001. *Elements of Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cook Wilson, J. 1926. *Statement and Inference*, volumes 1 & 2. A. S. L. Farquharson (ed.), Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cummins, Robert. 1998. 'Reflection on Reflective Equilibrium.' In M. DePaul and W. Ramsey (eds.), *Rethinking Intuition*, 113-27. Lanham, ML: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Dennett, Daniel. 1991. *Consciousness Explained*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- DePaul, Michael R. and Ramsey, William (eds.). 1998. *Rethinking Intuition*. Lanham, ML: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Descartes, René. 1984. *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Translated by J. Cottingham et al., Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Originally published in 1641.
- Dretske, Fred. 1995. *Naturalizing the Mind*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- _____. 1981. *Knowledge and the Flow of Information*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Eilan, N., McCarthy, R. and Brewer, B. (eds.). 1993. *Spatial Representation*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Ernst, Bruno. 1986. *Adventures with Impossible Objects*. Norfolk, England: Tarquin Press.
- Evans, Gareth. 1982. *The Varieties of Reference*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- _____. 1985. 'Things Without The Mind.' In his *Collected Papers*, 249-90. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Farrell, B. A. 1950. 'Experience.' *Mind* 59: 170-98.
- Fodor, J. 1994. 'The Mind-Body Problem.' In R. Warner and T. Szubka (eds.), *The Mind-Body Problem*, 24-40. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Frege, Gottlob. 1956. 'The Thought.' (Translated by A. M. and Marcelle Quinton.) *Mind* 65: 289-311. Originally published in 1918.
- Friedman, Michael. 1990. 'Form and Content.' In P. Yourgrau (ed.), *Demonstratives*, 215-231. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Goodale, Melvyn A. and Milner, A. David. 1995. *The Visual Brain in Action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gopnik, Alison and Eric Schwitzgebel. 1998. 'Whose Concepts Are They, Anyway? The Role of Philosophical Intuition in Empirical Psychology.' In M. DePaul and W. Ramsey (eds.), *Rethinking Intuition*, 75-91. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Grice, H. P. 1961. 'The Causal Theory of Perception.' *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society Suppl.* Vol. 35.: 121-152.
- _____. 1962. 'Some remarks about senses.' In R. J. Butler (ed.), *Analytical Philosophy*, 133-153. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Harman, Gilbert. 1990. 'The Intrinsic Quality of Experience.' In J. E. Tomberlin (ed.), *Philosophical Perspectives* 4, 31-52. Atascadero, CA.: Ridgeview.
- Hill, Christopher. 1991. *Sensations: A Defense of Type Materialism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hinton, J. M. 1973. *Experiences*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hume, David. 1975. *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, L.A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (eds.), Third Edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Originally published in 1748.
- _____. 1978. *A Treatise of Human Nature*, L.A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (eds.), Second Edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Originally published in 1739.
- Jackson, Frank. 1977. *Perception*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- _____. 1990. 'Epiphenomenal Qualia.' In W. Lycan (ed.), *Mind and Cognition*, 469-77. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. Originally published in *Philosophical Quarterly* 32, 127-36, (1982).
- _____. 1994. 'Armchair Metaphysics.' In J. O'Leary Hawthorne and M. Michael (eds.), *Philosophy in Mind*, 23-42. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- _____. 1998. *From Ethics to Metaphysics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kant, Immanuel. 1929. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated by Norman Kemp Smith. London: Macmillan Press Ltd. Originally published in 1781.
- Kornblith, Hillary. 1989. 'Introspection and Misdirection.' *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 67: 410-22.
- Kosslyn, Stephen and Osherson, Daniel. 1995. *Visual Cognition*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Laurence, Stephen and Margolis, Eric. Forthcoming. 'Concepts and Conceptual Analysis.' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*.
- Levine, Joseph. 1983. 'Materialism and Qualia: The Explanatory Gap.' *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 64: 347-61.
- _____. 1995. 'Qualia: Intrinsic, Relational or What?' In Thomas Metzinger (ed.), *Conscious Experience*, 277-92. Paderborn: Schöningh.
- _____. 2001. *Purple Haze*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lewis, David. 1986. *On The Plurality of Worlds*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- _____. 1994. 'Reduction of Mind.' In S. Guttenplan (ed.), *A Companion to the Philosophy of Mind*, 412-31. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Leyton, Michael. 1999. 'New Foundations for Perception.' In E. Lepore and Z. Pylyshyn (eds.), *What is Cognitive Science?*, 121-171. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Loar, Brian. 1997. 'Phenomenal States.' In N. Block, O. Flanagan, and G. Güzelde (eds.), *The Nature of Consciousness*, 597-615. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Locke, John. 1975. *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. P. H. Niddich (ed.). Oxford: Clarendon Press. Originally published 1690.
- Lycan, William. 1995. 'Layered Perceptual Representation.' In E. Villanueva (ed.), *Philosophical Issues* 7, 81-100. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview Publishing Company.
- Marion, Mathieu. 2000a. 'Oxford Realism: Knowledge and Perception I.' *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 8(2): 299-338.
- _____. 2000b. 'Oxford Realism: Knowledge and Perception II.' *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 8(3): 485-519.
- Marr, David. 1982. *Vision*. San Francisco, CA: W. H. Freeman.

- Martin, M. G. F. 1994. 'Perceptual Content.' In S. Guttenplan (ed.), *A Companion to the Philosophy of Mind*, 463-471. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- _____. 1997. 'The Reality of Appearances.' In Mark Sainsbury (ed.), *Thought and Ontology*, 81-106. Milano, Italy: Franco Angeli.
- _____. 1998. 'Setting Things before the Mind.' In A. O'Hear (ed.), *Current Issues in Philosophy of Mind*, 157-179. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 2000. 'Beyond dispute: sense-data, intentionality and the mind-body problem.' In T. Crane and S. Patterson (eds.), *History of the Mind-Body Problem*, 195-231, London: Routledge.
- _____. 2002a. 'Particular Thoughts and Singular Thoughts.' In A. O'Hear (ed.), *Logic Language and Thought*, 173-214. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 2002b. 'The Transparency of Experience.' *Mind and Language* 17, 376-425.
- _____. Forthcoming. 'The Limits of Self-Awareness.' *Philosophical Studies*.
- _____. Manuscript. *Uncovering Appearances*.
- McDowell, John. 1982. 'Criteria, Defeasibility and Knowledge.' *Proceedings of the British Academy* 68: 455-79.
- _____. 1986. 'Singular Thought and Extent of Inner Space.' In J. McDowell and P. Pettit (eds.), *Subject, Thought and Context*, 137-68. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 1994. *Mind and World*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- McGinn, Colin. 1982. *The Character of Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 1989. *Mental Content*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Moore, G.E. 1903. 'The Refutation of Idealism.' *Mind* 12.
- _____. 1913-14. 'The Status of Sense-Data.' *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* XIV, 355-80.
- _____. 1953. *Some Main Problems of Philosophy*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- _____. 1965. 'Visual Sense-Data.' In R. Swartz (ed.), *Perceiving, Sensing and Knowing*, 130-7. New York: Anchor Books. Originally published in C. Mace (ed.), *British Philosophy in the Mid-Century*. London: Allen & Unwin (1957).
- Nagel, Thomas. 1974. 'What is it like to be a bat?' *Philosophical Review* 83: 435-450.
- Papineau, David. 1993. *Philosophical Naturalism*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- _____. 2002. *Thinking about Consciousness*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Paul, G.A. 1965. 'Is there a Problem about Sense-Data?.' In R. Swartz (ed.), *Perceiving, Sensing and Knowing*, 271-87. New York: Anchor Books. Originally published in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume*, XV, 61-77, (1936).
- Peacocke, Christopher. 1983. *Sense and Content*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

- _____. 1986. 'Analogue Content.' *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 60: 1-17.
- _____. 1992. *A Study of Concepts*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press,
- Price, H.H. 1932. *Perception*. London: Methuen.
- _____. 1941. 'Critical Notice: Ayer's *Foundations of Empirical Knowledge*.' *Mind* 50: 280-93.
- Pritchard, H. A. 1909. *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Putnam, Hillary. 1994. 'The Dewey Lectures 1994: Sense, Nonsense, and the Senses: An Inquiry Into the Powers of the Human Mind.' *Journal of Philosophy* 91: 445-517.
- Rey, Georges. 1995. 'Towards a Projectivist Account of Conscious Experience.' In T. Metzinger (ed.), *Conscious Experience*, 123-42. Paderborn: Schoeninger.
- Robinson, Howard. 1994. *Perception*. London: Routledge.
- Russell, Bertrand. 1912. *The Problems of Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Schlick, Moritz. 1979. 'Form and Content. An Introduction to Philosophical Thinking.' In his *Philosophical Papers*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Searle, John. 1983. *Intentionality: An Essay in the Philosophy of Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Segal, Gabriel. 2000. *A Slim Book about Narrow Content*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Shoemaker, Sydney. 1980. 'Functionalism and Qualia.' In N. Block (ed.), *Readings in the Philosophy of Psychology* volume1, 251-67. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- _____. 1994. 'The Mind-Body Problem'. In R. Warner and T. Szubka (eds.), *The Mind-Body Problem*, 55-60. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- _____. 1996a. 'Qualities and qualia: what's in the mind?' In his *The First-Person Perspective and Other Essays*, 97-120. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 1996b. 'Self-knowledge and "inner-sense".' In his *The First-Person Perspective and Other Essays*, 201-68. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, A. David. 2000. 'Space and Sight.' *Mind* 109: 481-518.
- Soteriou, Matthew. 2000. 'The Particularity of Experience.' *European Journal of Philosophy* 8:173-189.
- Spelke, Elizabeth. 1990. 'Origins of Visual Knowledge.' In D. Osherson and H. Lasnik (eds.), *Visual Cognition and action: An invitation to cognitive science*, 99-127. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Stoljar, Daniel. Forthcoming. 'The Argument from Diaphanousness.' In M. Escudria, R. J. Stainton, and C. Viger (eds.), *New Essays in Philosophy of Language and Mind*, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy, Suppl. Vol.*

- Strawson, Galen. 1994. 'The Experiential and the Non-experiential.' In R. Warner and T. Szubka (eds.), *The Mind-Body Problem*, 69-86. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Strawson, P.F. 1959. *Individuals*. Oxford: Oxford University.
- _____. 1966. *Bounds of Sense*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 1979. 'Perception and its Objects.' In G. F. MacDonald (ed.), *Perception and Identity: Essays presented to A. J. Ayer*, 41-60. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Sturgeon, Scott. 2000. *Matters of Mind*. London: Routledge.
- Thau, Michael. 2002. *Consciousness and Cognition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tye, Michael. 1984. 'The Adverbial Approach to Visual Experience.' *Philosophical Review* 93, 195-225.
- _____. 1992. 'Visual Qualia and Visual Content.' In T. Crane (ed.), *The Contents of Experience*, 158-76. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 1995. *Ten Problems of Consciousness*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- _____. 2000. *Consciousness, Color and Content*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Williams, Bernard. 1978. *Descartes: the Project of Pure Enquiry*. New Jersey: Humanities Press.

